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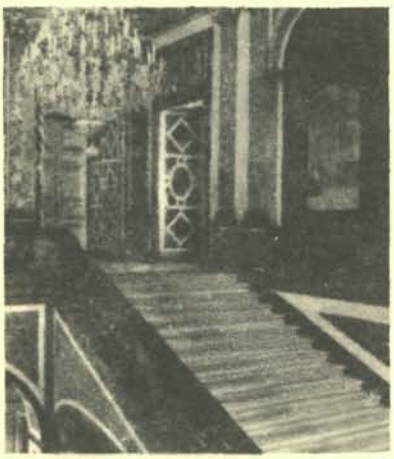

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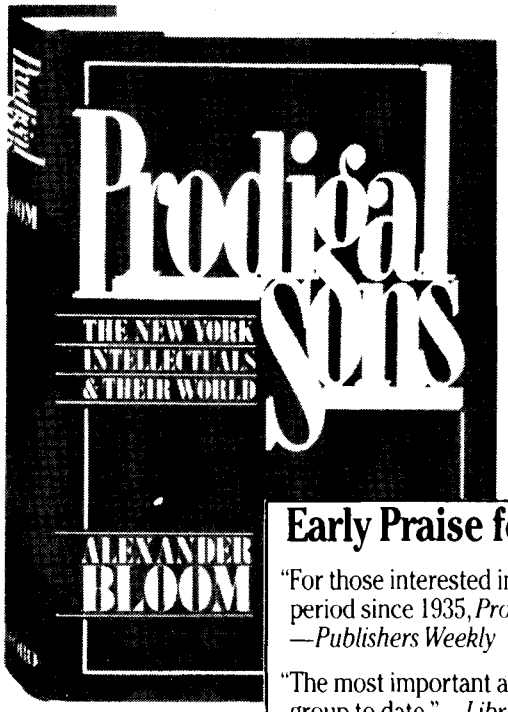

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Out of My Mind

Boris, John, and the Others

(for my father: 1901—1985)

JEREMY BERNSTEIN

La mort ne m'interresse pas.
C'est la fin que m'embête.
—Colette

I have never much cared for death and have avoided it whenever possible. But this year it seems to have caught up with me. I guess having spent much of my life in and around the mountains I should be used to the deaths of climbers—about seventy-five every summer used to get killed in Chamonix when I was spending Augusts climbing there. The odd thing is that none of the deaths of climbers that have affected me this year have come in the act of climbing. That seems to be reserved for the young. Climbers of my age die the old-fashioned way. I am going to describe four of them. Three I knew rather well, and the fourth—Don Whillans—I knew only through what had been written about him and from friends who told me about him.

Don Whillans, an Englishman with a working-class background, was born in a suburb of Manchester in 1933. I mention "working-class" because Whillans, along with that other British working-class climber Joe Brown, in the words of the obituary written about Whillans in the December 1985 *American Alpine Club News*, "burst upon the climbing scene in the 1950's and revolutionized British rock climbing. In doing so, Whillans and Brown demolished class distinctions and opened the way for working-class climbers." They became known as the "hard men," and no doubt that is why Joe Brown called his autobiography *The Hard Years*. My favorite photograph of Whillans is in this book. At first when one looks at it one has the impression that one must be looking at the scene from above. Whillans, who is on a route identified as "Esso Extra," has his legs spread-eagled at an angle that is well past a hundred degrees. Only when one studies the dangling ropes does one realize that one of Whillans's feet is actually on top of the other and that Whillans is clinging to the rock face like some oversized bat. In fact Whillans was, like many great climbers, very short. Brown writes that he "stood five feet four in his stockinged feet, broad in the shoulders and chest and exceptionally lively on his feet, like a middleweight wrestler in miniature."

Whillans was an unbelievable character. The best capsule description I have read of what he was like comes from a book by the Scottish climber and physician Tom Patey. The book is called *One Man's Mountains* and was published posthumously, in 1973, three years after Patey died, at the age of thirty-eight, while repelling down a rock face in the sea off Scotland. Patey was a wonderful raconteur, and one of his best pieces is called "A Short Walk with Whillans." The "walk" in question was an attempt to climb the murderous north face of the Eiger. I quote from its opening and closing sections, although the parts that I am not quoting are just as good. It begins:

"Did you spot that great long streak of blood on the road over from Chamonix? Twenty yards long, I'd say."

The speaker was Don Whillans. We were seated

JEREMY BERNSTEIN's latest book, written in collaboration with Gerald Feinberg, is called *Cosmological Constants*. He is now writing an autobiographical memoir.

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in the little inn at Alpiglen and Don's aggressive profile was framed against the awe-inspiring backdrop of the Eiger-Nordwand. I reflected that the conversation had become attuned to the environment.

"Probably some unfortunate animal," I ventured without much conviction.

Whillans' eyes narrowed. "Human blood," he said. "Remember lass?" (appealing to his wife Audrey), "I told you to stop the car for a better look. Really turned her stomach, it did. Just when she was getting over the funeral."

I felt an urge to inquire whose funeral they had attended. There had been several. Every time we went up on the Montenvers train [the cog railroad above Chamonix that leads to the Mer de Glace glacier] we passed a corpse going down. I let the question go. It seemed irrelevant, possibly even irreverent.

"Ay, it's a good life," he mused, "providing you don't weaken."

"What happens if you do?"

"They bury you," he growled, and finished his pint.

Whillans and Patey then set off to climb the Eiger. The inevitable nightmare of falling rocks and thunderstorms followed when suddenly, without warning, Whillans announced, after a lightning bolt had hit not far off, "That settles it," and proceeded to head down with Patey following. Their progress was arrested by the sight of what Patey describes as "two identical little men in two identical climbing uniforms, sitting side by side underneath an overhang"—out of the way of the bombardment of rocks being hailed down on them by the descending Whillans and Patey. When they got within speaking distance, Whillans asked, "Going up?" pointing, in Patey's words, to "the grey holocaust sweeping down from the White Spider."

"Yes, yes," they chorused in unison. "Up. Always upwards. First Japanese ascent."

"You—may—be—going—up—Mate," said Whillans, giving every syllable unnecessary emphasis, "but—a—lot—'igher—than—you—think!"

The Japanese did not know what to make of this, so they wrung his hand several times, and thanked him profusely for the advice.

"'Appy little pair!" said Don. "I don't imagine we'll ever see them again."

Patey goes on to note, "He was mistaken. They came back seven days later after several feet of new snow had fallen. They had survived a full-scale Eiger-blizzard and had reached our highest point of the Second Icefield. If they did not receive a medal for valour they had certainly earned one. They were the forerunners of the climbing élite of Japan, whose members now climb Mount Everest for the purpose of ski-ing back down again."

Mount Everest was also the scene of my favorite Whillans story. In 1971 the Austro-American climber and filmmaker Norman Dyhrenfurth had the idea of organizing a truly international expedition to climb the then unclimbed southwest face of Mount Everest. He put together a sort of Noah's ark of internationally famous climbers with the naive expectation that an aura of brotherly love would float above each tent. Instead it turned into a sort of Babelic ship of fools. The French climber Pierre Mazeaud walked out of camp saying that he had no intention of being a porter for the English. An Indian climber died of exposure because his Austrian climbing partner failed to understand that he was in serious trouble and left him alone on the wall. The only people who got anywhere were Whillans and his climbing partner, the distinguished Scottish climber Dougal Haston. (Haston later directed a climbing school in Leysin, Switzerland, that was popularly known in the fraternity as "Dangle with Dougal." He died in an avalanche while skiing in 1977.) Before their efforts on the wall, they had spent some time in base camp getting ready. It happened that this period coincided with the international soccer matches, which, by chance, pitted Britain against Germany in the finals and which were being broadcast over shortwave radio. At the end of the match, the Whillans-Haston tent flap was opened by a German climber who said to Whillans triumphantly, in a thick accent, "Whillans—we have just beaten you at your *national* game!" To which Whillans answered with a sneer, "We beat you at yours—twice. . . ." Whillans gave up expeditionary climbing a few years ago and, I gathered, spent his time lecturing on the sport to various workingman's clubs. It is difficult to believe that he died of a heart attack, at the age of fifty-two, while visiting friends in London last August.

Gaston Rébuffat, who died at age sixty-four of lung cancer on May 31, 1985, was, without

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doubt, at the time of his death the best-known climber in France. I had known him since the early 1960s. I met him when, with the help of my guide and friend, Claude Jaccoux, I was putting together the material for a profile of the Chamonix guides for *The New Yorker*. Rébuffat was born in Marseilles in 1921. Marseilles is, of course, on the Mediterranean, and so one might imagine it was not exactly an ideal locale in which to begin a career of mountain climbing. What is less well known is that, between Marseilles and the nearby seacoast town of Cassis, there is a series of fantastic reddish cliffs that plunge vertically into the water. They are known as the Callanques. I made one trip to Marseilles to climb on them in the 1960s and was astounded—indeed, petrified—that the first rock face Jaccoux and I tackled required, to get to the base of the climb, a traverse on a narrow rock ledge over the water. Indeed, the accepted method for making the climb was for one person to climb while the other watched for impending waves that could easily sweep one into the sea. Rébuffat discovered the Callanques when he was twelve. Ultimately he must have climbed every route in the Callanques, for which he wrote a noted guide. He once told me that one of the things he was proudest of in his life was that he had led a successful fight to keep them free of commercial exploitation.

He first saw the Alps around Chamonix when he was fourteen. He had walked there—it took fifteen days—from Briançon in the south of France. In the next few years Rébuffat began serious high-altitude climbing and in 1941 entered a kind of paramilitary unit called *Jeunessa et Montagne*, which was created by the Vichy government and composed partly of demobilized members of the French air force who had been recruited into it after the fall of France. Among the other recruits was a young alpinist from Grenoble, Lionel Terray. In his autobiography, which in French has the wonderful title *Les Conquérants de l'Inutile* (it is translated under the fatuous title *The Borders of the Impossible*), Terray describes the young Rébuffat. He "was of rather startling appearance at first sight, tall, thin, and stiff as the letter I. His narrow features were animated by two small, black, piercing eyes, and his somewhat formal manners and learned turn of phrase contrasted comically with a noticeable Marseilles accent."

Throughout his life Rébuffat was known, indeed made fun of, for his elaborate courtliness, even in the mountains. Jaccoux once entertained me with an imitation of Rébuffat when the two of them, along with several other guides, were engaged in making one of Gaston's spectacular mountain films. The scene was the north face of the Drus—a wall above Chamonix of comparable horror to the Eiger. They were in some sort of tight spot, and Jaccoux heard Rébuffat saying things like, "Dear friend, if you don't mind my saying so, your left foot is slightly misplaced, . . . etc., etc." Jaccoux was able to translate all of this as meaning that he had inadvertently stepped on Gaston's exposed shoulder with his crampon. As one might imagine, Rébuffat was a kind of bête noire to the British "hard men" who referred to him unkindly as "Ghastly Rubbafoot." In his book, Patey has a hilarious pastiche of Rébuffat's climbing manual *On Snow and Rock* in which, it is true, Rébuffat tries to give the impression that rock climbing is as effortless as ballroom dancing. Patey's version of Rébuffat begins:

> Stage One: with infinite delicacy the right foot is elevated eighteen inches and the boot tip placed deliberately on a tiny wrinkle. . . .

After the last "stage" Patey notes: "Strange! You're lying flat on the ground with a squashed nose." Following several more such attempts à la Rébuffat, Patey remarks:

> Suddenly and inexplicably you succeed.
> Why?
> Simple really. You lost your temper. . . . The old jungle juice started throbbing through your veins. If you had two hands to spare you would beat your chest with pride. Intellectually you may have retreated a couple of million years . . . physically you're thriving.
> Heave, clutch, thrutch, grunt! Up you go defying gravity. . . .

So much for Rébuffat.

Be all that as it may, starting with the fantastic climbs with Terray, Rébuffat became one of the greatest climbers who has ever lived. By 1950 this was evident when he and Terray were selected for the French expedition to Annapurna—the expedition that was led by Maurice Herzog, who later wrote the

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book *Annapurna* about the successful, but desperate, climb of the first 8,000-meter (26,427-foot) mountain climbed to its summit. The final push was made by the Chamonix guide Louis Lachenal and Herzog with Rébuffat and Terray as support. Then came the terrible descent that any reader of *Annapurna* will never forget. Something happened on that descent that alienated Terray and Rébuffat for life. They, more or less, never spoke another word to each other. I never found out exactly what happened and never had the courage to ask either man. I also knew Terray, who died in 1965 at the age of forty-four in a climbing accident. I admired both men enormously. They began with nothing but their own resources and became the symbols of the profession of mountain guide. Through their books, films, and lectures they infused a sense of the beauty and mystery of high mountains into tens of thousands of people who never had the opportunity to climb.

That I developed an interest in the mountains in my adult life had to do with a chance encounter I had when I was a graduate student at Harvard in the early 1950s. I was then taking a course in quantum mechanics from the legendary Julian Schwinger, and after one of the classes a lanky redheaded individual identified himself as John Noxon—I later learned that his full name was John Franklin Noxon III—and asked if he could borrow my notes for one of the classes he had missed. He had, somehow, gotten the erroneous impression that I took copious and clear notes—a canard if ever there was one. Indeed, my notes were so befuddled that we began to discuss them in detail and to work through the course together. Sometime during one of these discussions I found out that Noxon was a climber—not just a casual weekend walker in the hills but a certified expeditionary climber. I am not sure if he had been to the Himalayas and the Krakorum range in Pakistan before I met him, or after, but he had climbed in Alaska and Canada as well as South America and had compiled a record of sufficient distinction to have been elected to the American Alpine Club in 1954, a time at which the Alpine Club was open only to the elite of the climbing fraternity. (Rébuffat, incidentally, was elected an honorary member in 1971.)

Noxon and I found we had many common interests, one of them being to get out of the university dormitory, where we had both been living for a half-dozen years. We found a large apartment on the top floor of one of those old Cambridge triplex houses. To get to our rooms we had to pass through the dining room of the apartment below. The first morning after we were installed, Noxon was in the shower singing some obscene sea chantey at the top of his voice, with me joining in at the chorus. To our absolute astonishment, on the next chorus we were joined by a third voice—female—emanating from what had been, we thought, the empty second-floor apartment. Upon more careful examination we discovered that during the night three female graduate students had taken possession of the apartment below—yet another example of chance favoring the prepared mind. What a year! The women apart, Noxon and I were both putting in impossible hours trying to finish our Ph.D. theses as well as teaching in large undergraduate courses to make a living. Noxon worked in the basement of Jefferson Laboratory trying to re-create auroras. He ran mixtures of light gases through long tubes and, by electrifying the gases, could make them glow with the eerie colors of the northern lights. I did, in the meanwhile, a series of incredibly lengthy and probably meaningless computations on an electro-mechanical Monroe calculator. To add to the general ambience was the systematic arrival of what seemed like tons of alpine equipment, which was stored everywhere in our apartment. Noxon was preparing for an expedition somewhere, and our apartment served as a convenient depot.

In all, we roomed together for some three years, during a good deal of which Noxon was abroad in the hills. Even when he was around, the spirit of mischievous adventure was never far removed. Two episodes, among many, stand out in my mind. The first was the night we climbed Memorial Hall at Harvard. I can date this almost precisely to May of 1955. I have some confidence in the date because it had to have been *after* I had been officially granted my Ph.D. The reason was simple: climbing Memorial Hall was strictly illegal, and if one was caught, the penalty was summary expulsion. When Noxon proposed that we scale the great hall, I agreed, provided that it was after I had been granted my degree. I was already showing a craven submission to

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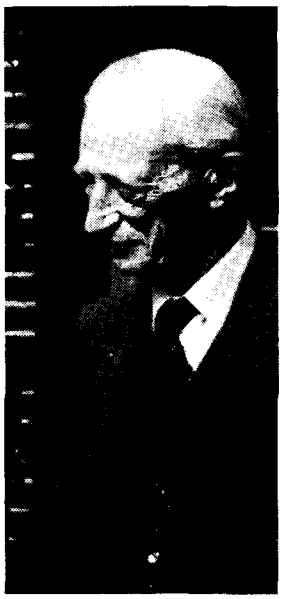

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convention, which has only gotten worse with age. In the event, the climb went without incident and at something like 2:30 A.M. on a moonless night we stood on the clock tower and micturated in the general direction of the graduate school.

The second incident was entirely legal, albeit no less mad. Noxon had gotten wind of the fact that there was going to be a total eclipse of the sun, whose path of totality would land not far south of Hudson Bay in Canada. A careful study of the atlas indicated that the then trans-Canadian highway intersected the putative eclipse path at what looked like a unique outpost of civilization whose name now eludes me. Noxon recruited one Arthur Read, a laconic British mathematician-climber—later, alas, killed climbing in Norway—as the third member of the group. A third member was an absolute budgetary necessity, both for the obvious reason that the costs would be divided by three and for the more subtle reason that the plan was to drive nonstop—twenty-four hours a day—for, as I recall, three days, in shifts of eight hours. (Twelve-hour shifts seemed draconian.)

Noxon and I presented ourselves, in all innocence, at the Cambridge branch of Hertz and told them we wanted to rent a car for a brief trip—brief in days. That was the genius of the scheme, since the mileage was free! All went according to plan, and we did indeed arrive at a godforsaken Indian village in northern Canada three days later, only to find that whatever accommodations might have been available had long before been rented out to solar astronomers who had made the same deduction that we had and had arrived before us, lugging tons of equipment with them. To boot, it was raining. There was no visibility at all, and it was hard to distinguish totality from the general gray-black miasma.

So that the experience would not be a total waste for them, several of the astronomers decided to give free lectures on solar astronomy to the local Indian population. It was an interesting cultural confrontation. We, on the other hand, wanted to return the car as soon as possible. Again we had three days of driving, now southward, in eight-hour shifts. When we presented the car to the man from Hertz, he took one look and decided to give it a thorough examination. He opened the front hood and a large dead bird fell out, one blackened with soot. I forget how Noxon explained the presence of the bird.

As I have mentioned, it was because of Noxon that I got back into climbing. I had done some climbing in Colorado and Wyoming at the end of high school and had decided that it was probably not for me. From fairly early childhood I had been reading sporadically about the mountains—enough at least to know about the British attempts at Everest and the German attempts on the Eiger north wall, but not enough to realize that there was a great mountain literature. John was a real scholar of mountain literature. He had a large collection himself and was especially fond of the Victorian and Edwardian British climbers, an interest he passed on to me. He also gave me the odd rock-climbing lesson in the Quincy Quarries not far from Cambridge. All of this lasted until 1957 when I left Cambridge for Princeton. John stayed on in Cambridge and eventually became the associate director of the Blue Hill Observatory, where he remained until 1971 when he went to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration in Boulder, Colorado. He remained there until his sudden and unexpected death in January of 1985. He was fifty-six.

During the years after I left Cambridge, I think that there was hardly a day when some quirky experience or other didn't remind me of John. We saw each other only rarely. In the 1970s he materialized one August in Chamonix, where I was spending my usual climbing month. Jaccoux laid on a small guided climb for us. Fortunately it was small because, the night before, we had all been at a gala in honor of Jaccoux's then brother-in-law Pierre Stamos. Pierre had just returned from Portillo, Chile, where he had beaten Jean Claude Killy in a downhill ski race—Pierre was a member of the French Olympic team. This was the occasion for a celebration. Each participant was required to sing something. When it came to our turn, the only thing Noxon and I could think of singing was "Home on the Range." Apart from those sporadic meetings we exchanged letters and cards. I have in front of me as I write one of the last things he wrote to me. The picture on the front was taken in the Tierra del Fuego on the southern tip of Argentina. I cannot make out the date on the canceled stamps, but I guess it dates to the early

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1980s. John was doing research in the Antarctic. The card reads: "Dear Rhombwell," (We addressed each other by assorted Sherpa names that varied according to the occasion.)

Never have these tired old eyes gazed upon a more *incroyable* place than this. I am about to set sail on the 38 meter long "Hero" for the North, my spectrometer in full swing. I now enjoy my last few pre *mal de mer* days at the Hotel Albatross.

Thine,
Narghur

When I heard that John had died, it was as if I had lost a brother.

I am sure that it was from John that I first heard the name Boris Nicolaevitch Lissanevitch—known simply as "Boris" or "Boris of Kathmandu." As far as I know, Boris never climbed a mountain, although he certainly did nearly everything else. But he knew, and was known by, nearly every Himalayan trekker and climber of a certain era. From 1956—only six years after the first foreign tourists were allowed in Nepal—to the late 1960s, the place where nearly every climber and trekker eventually stayed in Kathmandu was the Royal Hotel—that is, chez Boris. When I first went to Nepal in the fall of 1967 for a stay of several months, I headed directly for the Royal, largely on John's advice. Before I describe the hotel, let me first describe Boris; the two are inseparable in my mind.

Boris was born on October 4, 1905, in Odessa, into an aristocratic family whose principal occupation was horse breeding. His two brothers were naval officers, and Boris became a naval officer in training in the czarist navy until the revolution made it likely that he would be arrested as a member of the czar's armed forces. It happened that Boris had an aunt in Odessa who was the ballet mistress of the Odessa Opera Company. She had the inspired idea of having Boris registered as a member of the ballet company and, to make things more convincing, he began to study ballet. What began as a jape turned into a career, and Boris danced in Odessa until 1924, when he fled to Paris, eventually joining Diaghilev's Ballet Russes. He performed with such people as George Balanchine, Ninette de Valois, Léonide Massine, and Alexandra Danilova. Massine was the best man at Boris's first wedding, which was his marriage to the dancer Kira Stcherbatcheva. The daughter of a friend of mine who was, a few years ago, studying with the School of American Ballet in New York was astounded to see Madame Danilova, who teaches there, interrupt class to embrace an elderly, distinguished-looking, portly visitor—needless to say, Boris.

In 1933 Boris and Kira began a three-year tour of the Far East, ending up eventually in Calcutta, which curiously appealed a great deal to Boris as a city, especially its nightclubs and racetracks. One defect, according to Boris, was that it was impossible to get a drink after 2:00 A.M. With the help of some wealthy Calcutta friends Boris opened a private club, the "300" Club, which had exactly three hundred members, both Indian and European. It also had a Russian chef, Vladimir Haletzki, imported from Nice, who trained a whole generation of Indian sub-continental chefs to make Bœuf Stroganoff. Among the club's members was the king of Nepal, King Tribhuvan. In fact, at the time, the king was a figurehead, since Nepal had been run for a century as a kind of private preserve by a family known as the Ranas, through a law of hereditary succession of the prime ministers who actually ruled the country. It was useful to keep a king around since he was venerated, at least by the Hindu Nepalese, as a religious figure. King Tribhuvan visited Calcutta frequently for the nominal reason of its medical facilities—he was essentially a prisoner of the Ranas and had to have an acceptable reason for travel. In actual fact, Tribhuvan was plotting with both exiled Nepalese and the Indian Congress Party to overthrow the Ranas, and a number of these discussions took place in the "300." In 1951 the Ranas were overthrown; and in September of that year, Boris was flown to Kathmandu, for the first time, in the king's own plane.

Boris told me that the first night he was in Kathmandu he was taken for a ride around the city in the king's car with the king. (There were no roads leading very far outside the city, and it is likely that this car had been imported in pieces, on the backs of coolies, from India.) Just after they began their ride, a leopard jumped out of the darkness and onto the hood of the car, where it perched for a while, staring at the occupants, before going

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on its way. Boris said his first thought was, "My God, what a country!" and his second thought was how to arrange to move to Kathmandu. He needed an occupation. While in India, Boris had experimented with setting up a distillery, and so he thought he could do the same thing in Nepal. He acquired the exclusive legal franchise for brewing alcohol in the Kathmandu Valley and, on the strength of that, brought his new wife—a beautiful Danish woman named Inger Pheiffer—to Kathmandu. However, he had not realized that there were over a thousand illegal private distilleries in the valley whose proprietors were able to put enough pressure on the authorities to have Boris's license revoked; and, soon after, he landed in jail because of some quirk in the tax law, with jail in this case being the tax office itself, since the Nepalese were not sure what would be suitable housing for a foreigner going to jail. In the meantime, King Tribhuvan died and his son Mahendra realized that Boris was the only person in Nepal with enough experience to cater a coronation. Some arcane arrangement was worked out in which Boris was released from jail and everyone saved face.

While all of this was going on, Boris was already constructing the first tourist hotel in Nepal—the Royal. It was housed in half of a huge, leased Rana palace; the other half was occupied by the Nepal central bank. Everything—every fixture down to the last dish—had to be imported. Boris was determined to serve first-rate European cuisine, which meant he either had to grow the fruits and vegetables himself or import them by air from India or Singapore. When I was living in the Royal, the food was quite extraordinary and, indeed, there *was* Bœuf Stroganoff. There were two social centers in the Royal: the Yak and Yeti bar and Boris's own apartment. In the latter, one could find *le tout* Kathmandu—everyone ranging from members of the Nepalese royal family, foreign ambassadors, to climbers like Sir Edmund Hillary and beautiful women who seemed to abound in Kathmandu. On the few occasions when Boris wanted his peace and quiet, the same group assembled in the Yak and Yeti bar. Both places were wonderfully decorated with Nepalese and Indian art. I spent many hours with Boris hearing about his remarkable life and getting his ideas and help about whom I should interview for the book I was writing on Nepal. Boris once showed me a box containing a collection of rocks that had been given to him by climbers who had taken them from the summits of several of the highest mountains on earth. He enjoyed climbers a great deal and gave them what he called his "expedition rate" at the hotel. Boris was always giving things away, and this is probably one of the reasons why the Royal finally went out of business. By 1969, when I returned to Nepal for a second visit, it was defunct.

Nothing could keep Boris down for long. By the time of my next visit, which was in 1979, he had already been through another disastrous hotel experience and now had opened a luxury restaurant on the outskirts of Kathmandu. When I visited it with two friends, Boris insisted on treating us to lunch and drinks. It was impossible to pay for anything. The only other "customers" were a table of about fifteen people who, in effect, could have stepped out of Han Suyin's novel *The Mountain Is Young*. This is surely the only roman à clef to have been written about Kathmandu. Boris appears thinly disguised under the name Vassili, and, indeed, everyone at that table could also be found in the novel. I am sure Boris was treating them to lunch as well. Predictably the restaurant went under despite a worldwide appeal to all of Boris's friends and admirers for money to keep it going. The last time I saw Boris was in Kathmandu in the fall of 1983. He seemed unchanged and told me about several schemes he was engaged in and which he did not live to see realized. He died on October 23, 1985, in Kathmandu. He was eighty.

Death . . . Death. You have been very active among the people I love. Rest awhile.

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Tea and Antipathy

ARISTIDES

Imagine my chagrin at learning, as I not long ago did, that a writer whom I rather blithely despised for what I take to be his fraudulent self-righteousness and utterly self-assured hypocrisy, had cancer. Until then I had so enjoyed loathing him, my distaste for everything about him had seemed so complete, so pure, so uncomplicatedly pleasant, and now it was incomplete, alloyed by his misfortune, complicated by my own sympathy for his illness. This was a real setback. I had counted on being able to continue disliking him for another decade or two. It was as if someone had removed a wall against which I had happily grown accustomed to banging my head.

"You know," I explained to a very dear friend, "while I dislike quite a few people, I do not really wish them to undergo physical pain and certainly not death." "I understand," she said, "you merely wish those you despise to feel more stress." That was it precisely. More stress is exactly what I wished for those whom I consider my enemies. By stress I mean I wish that their children will grow up to dislike them; I wish them trouble with the IRS, sharp reductions in the status that is so vital to their well-being, perhaps a bit of public humiliation—all the little things that cause, as my friend so delicately put it, "more stress."

I suppose this makes me a pretty good but not a great hater. I should rather not be a hater at all, of course. I respect people who struggle against permitting themselves the indulgence of hating. It is much grander, I realize, to be above such mean feelings. Lofty amusement leading on to generalizations about the flaws in human nature seems to me a finer response to people whom one finds repugnant. How much better to accept people as we find them! Yet I find that to love one's neighbor often involves an effort of will, whereas to hate one's enemy seems to come so naturally. What does not come naturally to me is ready forgiveness for injuries suffered. On those occasions when I have made an earnest attempt to turn the other cheek, in that other cheek I have inevitably discovered my tongue inserted. Hating exacts such a strong feeling that it can be a serious distraction; indulged in a concentrated way, it can even diminish one's own high opinion of oneself. Hating can skew the judgment, furrow the brow, take the bloom off one's complexion. Getting one's knickers in a twist, as the English used to call being in an agitated state, tends to remove the crease from one's trousers. It ain't, kiddo, good.

I have never been fond of the prospect of myself hating someone, and early in life I tried my best to avoid doing so. Like everyone else, I encountered people I did not like. Usually I was able to register my distaste for their selfishness or their cruelty or their crudity and then avoid them whenever possible; as with sand traps and water holes on a golf course, I shot around them and played on through. But all this changed when, in my late twenties, I became enmeshed in intellectual life. Something there is about the nature of intellectual life that seems to encourage rivalrous and rancorous feelings. Edward Shils, a thinker who does not fall back regularly on psychological labels, has said that paranoia is the reigning psychological condition of the intellectual, and I believe he is absolutely correct. Anyone who has worked among scholars knows that, in the humanities and social sciences, there is no academic subject,

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from numismatics on up, that does not have its politics, and these politics can sometimes be internecine. Such politics do not discourage paranoia. "Even paranoids have real enemies," famously said Delmore Schwartz, who was himself certifiably paranoid. Not every intellectual is a paranoid, but I have yet to meet one who did not claim to have real enemies. And this is especially so among literary intellectuals. "I don't know how it is in other professions," says a character in George Gissing's *New Grub Street*, "but I hope there is less envy, hatred and malice than in this of ours."

In intellectual life sticks and stones are not thrown, but well-aimed words can pierce the skin. By now the intellectual insult has acquired nearly the status of a genre. It has been going on long enough for Penguin Books to bring out not one but two collections of famous literary insults. Pride of place in this line perhaps ought to go to Alexander Pope, who in *The Dunciad* set down 1,670 ten-syllable lines, not a false rhyme among them, blasting away at his contemporaries for "dullness," a comprehensive term Pope meant to include shoddy reasoning, bad taste, and general stupidity. Much of the time Pope felt he was returning insult for injury; and no target was too minor for him to knock off, for, as he put it, "It would vex one more to be knocked on the head with a piss-pot than by a thunderbolt."

William Hazlitt—"pimpl'd Hazlitt" to his enemies—is another English writer who gave rather better than he got. Perhaps it is more accurate to say, when he got, he gored, for he had a lovely knack of combining fury with precise formulation, with which he could rip an opponent wide open. When Hazlitt's book on Shakespeare was attacked by William Gifford, the editor of the *Quarterly Review*, Hazlitt replied in a forty-page "Letter to William Gifford, Esquire," in which he described the *Quarterly Review* as the "receptacle for the scum and sediment of all the prejudice, bigotry, ill-will, ignorance, and rancour afloat in the kingdom." The Goncourt Brothers made a specialty of dining out in Paris and returning home to put down—in both senses of the phrase—the behavior of their dinner companions in their famous journal. Chekhov claimed to be "physically repelled by abuse no matter at whom it is aimed," and wondered why journalistic critics "write in a tone fit for judging criminals rather than artists and writers." Yet even Chekhov, for all his vaunted "gentle humanity," could be savage when confronting a point of view or an intellectual position he thought spurious.

In our day some of the most vicious insults seem to have been made by the intellectuals gathered around the magazine *Partisan Review*. Their best shots were all fired behind one another's backs in the form of comments that somehow always found their way to their targets. The paranoia of Delmore Schwartz, who was an associate editor of *Partisan Review*, was in this sense planted in fertile soil. Schwartz himself is supposed to have said of Lionel Trilling that of course he was very intelligent, but he wished Trilling didn't say even the most obvious things in a tone of voice more appropriate for announcing a cure for cancer. Philip Rahv, one of the principal editors of *Partisan Review*, was especially brutal at the behind-the-back intellectual insult, and, when asked why he went in for it with such vehemence, chalked it up to what he called "analytical exuberance." In *The Truants*, William Barrett's splendid memoir of the *Partisan Review* crowd, Barrett recalls Delmore Schwartz remarking, " 'Analytic exuberance'—Philip Rahv's euphemism for putting a knife in your back." William Phillips, the magazine's other principal editor, used to refer to Rahv's various wives and women friends as his "alter-Iagos." Nobody escaped this kind of maiming remark. When some years ago I asked another member of the *Partisan Review* crowd how Harold Rosenberg (who was then still alive) was doing, he said, "You know Harold, still acquiring every expensive painting he can lay his hands on while waiting for Marxism to get its third wind." And they say words can't kill.

Do people say such horrendous things about me behind my back? In his essay "On The Pleasures of Hating," Hazlitt remarks, "I care little what any one says of me, particularly behind my back, and in the way of critical and analytical discussion: it is looks of dislike and scorn that I answer with the worst venom of my pen." I care rather more, but I suppose I must count myself lucky in having very few rough things that were said about me behind my back reported to me. When I was much younger I had a friend who used to say terrible things to my face, and then go and

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praise me behind my back—a strange reversal of normal procedure. Such insults made about me behind my back that have been reported to me have tended not to be well formulated but merely sincere expressions of heartfelt hatred. No one thus far has thought to say of me, "He writes very nicely. Do you suppose English is his first language?" Or: "He appears to have such confidence in his views. Looking at him, and given those views, I cannot for the life of me imagine whence this confidence derives."

No, for the most part my enemies have stabbed me in the front. I have been called some charming things in print, among them a "cultural terrorist" and a "Stalinist." I was once called a "racist" for writing that my own children, before they had developed table manners, ate like Apaches. A vastly overheated third-line literary critic once led off an essay about me and two other writers who share some of my views with an epigraph from Hemingway that made reference to "yellow bastards." On more than one occasion people have asked, publicly, that I be fired from my job. In every one of these instances I believe I understood the motives behind such behavior, but for me, I am sorry to report, to understand all is not to pardon all. I shall doubtless forget many of these insults, yet I have not truly forgiven any that I can remember. *Dieu les pardonnera*, to paraphrase Heine. *C'est son métier.*

I prefer not to meet the people I dislike. Perhaps this is because, being an intellectual, I tend to dislike them for their ideas, and to discover, upon meeting them, the ideas made flesh can be disconcerting. One is likely to discover some quality in them, even some defect, that curbs one's distaste. I not long ago attended a conference at which I met an editor whose magazine encourages just about everything I find lamentable in public life. If the ideas promoted in his magazine were to win through, this country would become an exceedingly unpleasant place for me. At a session of the conference at which I spoke I had no trepidation about attacking these ideas. But at the break for lunch I found myself walking ten or fifteen yards behind this editor, from which perspective I noticed that he had bad feet. He walked funnily; he wore special shoes; he lived with real discomfort, possibly persistent pain; he became more human for me. I could no longer dislike him with the same cheerful gusto. Making enemies is easy, William Dean Howells once noted, but keeping them is not.

I am reminded of a letter George Orwell wrote to Stephen Spender in which he explains how he had once been able to attack Spender but had changed his mind after meeting him. Orwell tells Spender that he regarded him as a poet whose verse meant very little to him as well as a Communist sympathizer—the letter was written in 1938—to whose views Orwell himself was hostile. He was able to think of Spender, as he puts it, "as a type & also an abstraction. Even if when I met you I had not happened to like you, I should still have been bound to change my attitude, because when you meet anyone in the flesh you realise immediately that he is a human being & not a sort of caricature embodying certain ideas." Orwell concludes: "It is partly for this reason that I don't mix much in literary circles, because I know from experience that once I have met & spoken to anyone I shall never again be able to show any intellectual brutality towards him, even when I feel I ought to."

Since reading that letter many years ago, I have had a few opportunities to meet Stephen Spender, but have gone a bit out of my way to avoid doing so. I have never treated him to the intellectual brutality that Orwell speaks about, yet the fact is that I prefer to hang on to my strong dislike of his writing, and do not wish to jeopardize it through personal encounter. I prefer to keep the possibility of intellectual brutality in reserve, for I find I cannot meet someone, pretend to like him, and then attack him in print—I cannot do so, that is, without a strong sense of acting hypocritically. On the other hand, I note a number of people who have not allowed personal meetings with me to keep them from treating me with intellectual brutality afterwards. (Can it be that my personal charm is not quite foolproof?) On the third hand—we complicated thinkers sometimes require four or five hands to make our point—I greatly admire those few writers I know who can go on the attack, or take an attack, no holds barred, and have drinks afterwards with the very people with whom they have just engaged in intellectual combat. Such writers seem to be able to hate certain intellectual positions without hat-

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ing the people who hold them—to hate, that is, the sin but not the sinner.

Nature, remarks Hazlitt, seems "made up of antipathies: without something to hate, we should lose the very spring of thought and action." Hating, it is discouraging to report, may be more interesting than loving. Certainly the range of emotions associated with hatred is much greater than that associated with love, and its language is correspondingly richer. Indignation, rage, scorn, disgust, loathing, fury, vengeance, grudge, contempt, jealousy, contumely, malice, wrath, embitterment, and let us not forget our old friend *schadenfreude*—now here is a vocabulary a fellow can work with. Think of the writers who, were it not for hating, would be out of business. Swift comes immediately to mind, for all strong satire begins in hatred. Dostoyevski hated in the name of Christianity. Strindberg and Ibsen blew a cold wind of hatred down from the north. None of these, I must confess, is among my favorite authors. But other authors whom I adore hated, so to speak, selectively. The English critic D. W. Harding wrote an essay on Jane Austen entitled "Regulated Hatred," in which he argues that Jane Austen had very mixed feelings about the society in which she lived. Dickens believed in evil and despised it wherever he descried it. Max Beerbohm, who once said that anger was "a rare feeling for me," nonetheless deeply disliked, if he did not actively despise, George Bernard Shaw. And Karl Kraus, whose satirical lashings appeared in his own Viennese journal *Die Fackel,* to which he eventually became the sole contributor, said, "I no longer have any collaborators. I used to be envious of them. They repel those readers whom I want to lose myself."

Things worth hating in the world are never in short supply: hypocrisy, cowardice, cruelty, disloyalty. Then there are world-class villains, among whom Stalin and Hitler remain permanently hateful. Hatred between nations is far from scarce: the Greeks hate the Turks, the Koreans hate the Japanese, the Irish hate the English, there is no love lost between the Pakistanis and the Indians, and everyone keeps a cold spot in his heart for the Germans. Nirad C. Chaudhuri, the gifted Indian writer, has written about what he calls "the real East-West conflict," the hatred of the Third World for the West, which, "arising from historical experience, has bitten into the subconscious to become a self-propagating emotion capable of discovering ever new grievances to feed itself." Chaudhuri wrote that in 1957, and I should like to show anyone who believes that things have improved since that time some choice real estate in downtown Managua.

Politics provides the clearest channel for hatred. Tell me your politics and I shall tell you whom you despise: Qaddafi or Botha, Arafat (Yasir, that's my baby) or Pinochet. Yet impersonal hatred is sometimes difficult to sustain. The larger the object of hatred, the less concentrated the emotion one can bring to it. There are of course men and women who can hate entire peoples. Anti-Semites are an ugly example. ("He who hates the Jews," Eugen Weber has written, "hates mankind.") But I know a woman, a Polish Jew from Lodz who was in Auschwitz, who not only hates the Germans but also hates the Poles; and, when the Russians were bearing down on the Poles during the rise of Solidarity, I recall her remarking that, remembering how cruel the Poles were to the Jews during the Nazi era, she could feel no sympathy for them now as victims of the Russians. Yet her hatred was not impersonal—far from it. There are hatreds one doesn't approve but has to respect.

Easily the most hated American political figures of my lifetime have been Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Richard Nixon. I was seven years old when Roosevelt died, and never felt any special animosity toward him, then or since. To this day, though, I run into old-line Republicans whose fuse goes off at the mere mention of his initials. Nixon, for me, was a different story. As a youthful reader of the *New Republic*—weekly strolling, as S. J. Perelman once put it, down "the *couloirs* of the House and Senate, aghast at legislative folly"—I early decided that Richard Nixon was the villain of villains. (I am now a middle-aged reader of the *New Republic*, but one who, as my next paragraph will make plain, appears to have run out of aghast.) Nixon's political victories left me sullen, his setbacks brought me a refreshed belief in the progress of humankind. I detested him deeply and comprehensively.

When Richard Nixon lost the gubernatorial race in California in 1962, I greeted the news in the manner in which the Hasidim greet the Jewish holiday known as Simchas Torah—

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with dancing in the streets. After he announced his retirement from politics, however, telling journalists assembled for a news conference that they would no longer have Dick Nixon to kick around, I became nervous. Without Richard Nixon to despise, what would I now do with my spare time? As history shows, I need not have worried. Another decade of reverse ecstasy awaited me. Yet at Richard Nixon's greatest defeat, Watergate, I discovered that, somehow, my scorn had flown, my fury had grown flaccid. The events surrounding Watergate brought other Nixon haters paroxysms of pleasure; one sensed that, during the Watergate hearings, they could scarcely wait to pop out of bed in the mornings to watch these hearings on television and, baby, let the good times roll. I found I could not join them. I should have felt the delight associated with consummation, but instead felt only sadness. Unrequited love may be a bore, but hatred, I suspect, may never allow for a satisfying conclusion.

Richard Nixon is a man who did not wish to be hated, but more interesting to me are those people who do not seem to care whether they are hated or not. Some among them seem not merely unconcerned about having enemies but appear actively to seek them out, and usually have no difficulty in finding them. F. R. Leavis was evidently such a man. Always kind to his students, he could be crushing to colleagues or to anyone else who didn't agree with his views. Simon Gray, the playwright, who was a student of Leavis's at Cambridge, has recalled another of his teachers asking him what he thought of Leavis. Gray reports: " 'Yes,' he said fretfully, when I'd nearly got into my stride, 'I do wish he'd hurry up and die.' " Yvor Winters, the American poet and critic, lived out his days in roughly the same combative condition as F. R. Leavis. In an essay about his friend the poet J. V. Cunningham, Winters wrote about "the doctrine of hatred, or anger," arguing that "it is no accident that so many great writers have sooner or later retreated from society," from which they feel excluded. Hating and being the object of hatred is not the gentlest way to live, a fact that Winters knew well enough to write a lovely poem on the subject entitled "Hymn to Dispel Hatred at Midnight," whose final lines run:

> Hence unto God, unsought,
> My anguish sets. Oh, vain
> The heart that hates! Oh, naught
> So drenched in pain!
> Grief will not turn again.

Although Leavis and Winters clearly had what used to be called "a natural cussedness," it is more important to note that both men lived against the intellectual spirit of their times. So, too, did William Hazlitt and Karl Kraus live against the spirits of their respective times. To say no, to go against the flow, is a most efficient way to accumulate enemies. I fancy myself a man who in some respects sails against the Zeitgeist, yet I do not fancy myself someone who hungers for intellectual combat or derives real delight from having enemies (though I do have a few enemies that I am rather proud of). When I used to get a piece of hate mail, or find myself saying something that I knew would bring me the enmity of other people in the room, it would cause my stomach to churn. Nothing much for it, however. An intellectual is finally the sum of his opinions, especially if these opinions add up to a point of view; and he cannot change them to suit the company he happens to be with at the moment. But I had better stop before I begin to sound like Lillian Hellman in trousers.

Bandying about a variety of strongly held opinions may in some ways influence people, but it is not the surest way to make friends. Where possible I try to keep my own opinions in check. Difficulties arise when others come forth with confidently put opinions opposed to my own. Along with reflexes, muscle tone, and a few other items, tact departs with age; and in such situations I find it increasingly difficult to hold back from saying precisely what I think. I was not long ago in the company of an editor of a journal of opinion who was in the habit of using such introductory phrases to his sentences as "On balance" or "To be fair," after which usually followed statements that were neither particularly balanced nor fair. I found I could not resist pointing out to him his little tic of using falsely impartial phrases, and thereby made, I feel confident, another lifelong friend.

Certain subjects make for natural enmity and can turn polite society into impolite soci-

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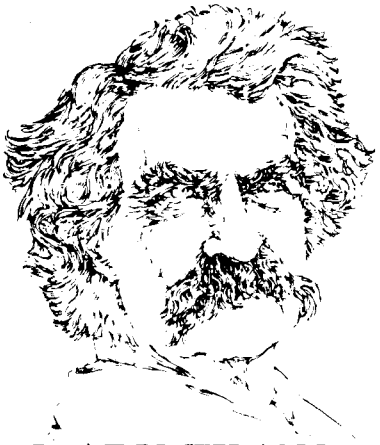

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ety—fast. If one is looking to save on fuel bills, politics is likely to heat up a room quicker than just about anything else. In certain circles, the subject of educational reform will turn the trick. In recent years, discussion of the women's movement can be depended upon to send the thermostat up thirty or so degrees. (In Barbara Pym's novel *Some Tame Gazelle*, I find this lovely line: " 'I shall never understand women,' said Dr. Parnell complacently.") Similarly, certain names have acquired a built-in explosive quality. In this connection, the name of Henry Kissinger is an almost foolproof land mine. In intellectual quarters mention of the name of Norman Podhoretz, Susan Sontag, or George Steiner is guaranteed to get the conversation off small talk. When he was alive the conductor Georg Szell, famous for his autocratic behavior, could inflame anyone he worked with. Once, when Szell stormed out of the New York Met, someone said that he was his own worst enemy. To which Rudolf Bing responded, "Not while I'm alive." But one doesn't have to be alive for one's name to continue carrying the power to raise blood pressure. I was seated some years ago at a dinner with nine people, most of us strangers to one another, when someone brought up the name Robert Hutchins. A mild-looking, bespectacled man queried gently, "May I ask, is there anyone at this table who is Robert Hutchins's son-in-law or niece or anything of that sort?" When no one allowed having any such relation to Hutchins, the man leaned in and hissed, "I hate everything about that s.o.b."

A distinguished university president, upon retiring from his job, is said to have remarked about the people with whom he worked, "I don't hate anyone, but I must admit that I despise a great many people." That very precise formulation reminds me that I have been using the word *hate* in rather a baggy-pants fashion—that is, so loosely that almost any unpleasant feelings can be fit into it. Yet the range of distaste of a healthy hater is vast, subtle, and topographically intricate. It is, for instance, perfectly possible to like someone without in the least respecting him, and just as possible to respect enormously someone one doesn't in the least like. Then there is that rather ample body of people whom one neither likes nor respects but who do not come near qualifying for one's hatred. The university president is correct; one can despise a person for acts of cowardice or duplicity or shameless self-promotion—I restrict myself to standard despicable academic behavior—without hating him. Despising is much to be preferred; hating takes up too much psychic energy.

Many other things in life are not worth despising but instead simply tick one off. Some among them are obvious: inefficiency, incompetence in high places, empty language, vandalism, waste, and so forth. Where things that tick one off become interesting, though, is where the rational gives way to the quirky and the quirky to the slightly mad. In one of the essays in *The Crack-Up*, F. Scott Fitzgerald drew up a list of things that, during a bad time in his life, he could not bear: "I couldn't stand the sight of Celts, English, Politicians, Strangers, Virginians, Negroes (light or dark), Hunting People, and middlemen in general, all writers (I avoided writers very carefully because they can perpetuate trouble as no one else can)—and all the classes as classes and most of them as members of their class." Even for someone in the throes of a nervous breakdown, that is an impressively comprehensive list of antipathies. I have never put together such a list of my own, but if I did, one of the items on it would be people who make too great a fuss about the stylishness of F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Unlike Fitzgerald's antipathies, which tend to fall into categories, my own are almost exclusively particular. Too fancily cut beards, for example, will set me off, but so will unkemptness. I was not long ago pleased to see this antipathy shared by the late George Balanchine, who noted that beards, which were authentic in his father's generation, today are the essence of stylelessness: "All right, somebody wants to look like Christ, you know—the hair and all. But it's silly, it looks silly on people. It's all a fake." Vanity license plates on cars can get me worked up. And people who have installed telephones in their cars "tick me to the max," as the kids say nowadays. When, in my own car, I see someone driving alongside me talking into a car telephone, it is all I can do to refrain from asking him if he would mind terribly calling my wife to tell her that I shall be late for dinner.

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Parents who express their own pitiful yearnings for elegance and give their children a poor start in life by awarding them pretentious names—Ashley or Brandon, Fairfax or Tiffany—seem to me blinkin' awful. Although it is probably the sheerest economic jealousy on my part, it lifts my spirits to discover that someone driving a Rolls Royce looks sad. In traffic I never give such people a break; nor do I give a break to people who drive Cadillacs, Mercedeses, Jaguars, or BMWs; I figure that they have already had their breaks in life. I secretly hope that people who militantly pursue culture never find it. All the world loves a winner, it is said, but I find myself regularly pulling against too-consistent winners: the Boston Celtics in basketball, the Los Angeles Dodgers in baseball, the Dallas Cowboys in football. Such is the complexity of these matters that I sometimes find my antipathies deeply divided: when, for example, Gore Vidal and Norman Mailer argue, or Barbara Walters interviews Lauren Bacall, or General Westmoreland sues Mike Wallace and CBS. As you can see, a man with strong antipathies is seldom bored.

Shared antipathies can sometimes be the basis for friendship, especially when the antipathies give one the feeling of belonging to a select minority. This has happened to me on more than one occasion. Living in the South in the late 1950s and early 1960s, I found myself falling in with a social set whose single defining characteristic was its strong anti-segregationist sentiment. More recently, as a contemner of much of the new literary criticism and social theory now rampantly fashionable in universities, I have found myself warming immediately to those who share my strong views. "Of course, I loathe all that garbage," said a young teacher, a new acquaintance, over a Chinese lunch. Here was a sentence that added great flavor to my Mongolian beef and tea. Tea and sympathy is nice, but tea and shared antipathy is even better. But behind shared antipathies even greater sympathies must lie.

When antipathy replaces what was once sympathy, sadness results. The hatred for each other of parties to a divorce is perhaps the most obvious example. "Of all the objects of hatred," wrote Max Beerbohm in *Zuleika Dobson*, "a woman once loved is the most hateful." One has first truly to have loved another person to be able to hate him or her in the way that divorcing couples are often able to hate each other. In a divorce all the weapons for effective hatred are nicely in place: knowledge of each other's desires, fears, and unpleasant little secrets, all of which can be brought into play for vengeance or betrayal. At a lower level of intensity are friendships that have been sharply broken off or have been allowed to go sour. When this occurs the chain of emotion runs, or at least it has in my experience, from anger, to sadness, to regret, to antipathy, to apathy, to cold indifference, to no longer giving a damn. I recently learned that a former friend was to undergo a divorce in a marriage that was crucial to him; and what I felt at learning this sad fact was—almost nothing at all. Even *schadenfreude*, the malicious enjoyment of another's misfortune, would have been preferable. In some situations hatred seems much more human than simple indifference.

In half a century of middle-class living, I believe I have felt a fairly full range of the feelings, grand and petty, that are usually subsumed under the category of hatred. I have felt jealousy, envy, and rage; I have felt petulance, distaste, and irrational prejudice. But I do not believe that I have ever felt that emotional condition known as self-hatred. ("Why should he feel self-hatred," I can hear someone about whom I have written wounding things say as he reads that last sentence, "when my hatred for him is surely enough for both of us.") I have been angry with myself for committing foolish errors, ashamed of myself for insensitive behavior, disgusted at myself on those occasions when I have failed to meet other people's quite reasonable expectations for me—but sustained and pervasive hatred of myself, this I have come nowhere close to feeling. The conventional wisdom about self-hatred is that it is the hatred internalized by those people—minority groups, deviants, etc.—who feel themselves despised as outsiders in their own societies. Yet I wonder how true this is. I have known people with a talent for self-destruction; I have known people who were ashamed of their backgrounds; I have known people who have attempted suicide, but I am far from certain that any of them qualifies as a true self-hater. Then there are

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those people who seem to spew up so much hatred that one assumes that it must derive from a volcano of hatred for themselves. It would be gratifying if this were so, but I am not convinced that it is.

When I think of the strong haters I have known, the ugly, the really lethal haters, they have almost always been sorely disappointed people. Life, they somehow feel, has let them down. They are not where they want to be, not doing what they want to do. Things have gone awry, things are askew, all's wrong with the world—and everyone else is to blame. Their argument is with Fate, but they quarrel with you and me. Disappointment embitters, and embitterment sups comfortably with hatred.

Although I have said more than a few kind words for hating in this essay, I hope I do not qualify as a serious hater. I know I have not been disappointed by life—quite the contrary. As Philip Rahv assigned his propensity for poisonous remarks about his colleagues to analytic exuberance, so do I assign my manifold antipathies to what I prefer to think of as "nice discrimination." ("You are, sir," says Sydney Greenstreet to Humphrey Bogart in *The Maltese Falcon*, "a man of nice discrimination.") Sometimes I fear my discrimination has become too nice. Recently, for example, a friend offered to put forward my name for a club whose membership is made up of men who work in the arts, publishing, journalism, and government. Reading down the club's membership roll, I discovered that, among those whose names I knew, there were more members I disliked than liked—and thus I declined the generous offer to join this club. I believe this qualifies me as distinctly unclubbable, something I had never intended to become.

As I grow older, my guess is that my antipathies, dislikes, peeves, and prejudices (rational and irrational) will not grow fewer. Shall I gradually become a curmudgeon—am I one already?—and end my days as a full-blown crank? It is not, I confess, quite what I had in mind for my old age. Yet I must also confess that I have never worked so well until I learned what it was I detested in life. "Hate must make a person productive," Karl Kraus wrote, "otherwise one might as well love." And Chekhov has a character, in his story "Gooseberries," who exclaims, "I am old and not fit for the struggle; I am not even capable of hatred." For myself, it was only when I came to know what I hated that I came to love intensely those things that matter most to me in life. Hatred is finally only productive in the name of love. That, I recognize, comes near to being a paradox, which is unfortunate, because, as it happens, I hate paradoxes.

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Desecrating the Holy Woman

Derek Freeman's Attack on Margaret Mead

ROY A. RAPPAPORT

A RUMOR FROM THE SOUTH SEAS arriving in New York by way of Cambridge, Massachusetts, at the end of January 1983, was sufficiently startling for the *New York Times* to spread it in a story commencing on its front page and continuing for more than a yard of columns inside. The headline proclaimed, "New Samoa Book Challenges Margaret Mead's Conclusions." That book, not to be published for another two months, was, of course, *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth*, by Derek Freeman. The myth it was claiming to unmake was the account of adolescence, particularly of girls, brought back from Samoa more than a half century earlier by Mead, who, at twenty-three, was hardly out of her own adolescence when she set out in 1925 for her first field research, later reported in the 1928 best-seller *Coming of Age in Samoa*. Now, seven and a half years after her death, both her facts and her conclusions were being publicly questioned by a sixty-six-year-old professor emeritus from Australian National University who had begun work on his critique when he himself was very young, more than forty years before he finally published it. The three years that have elapsed since word of Freeman's exposé burst upon us provide some distance from the event, but its place, if any, in the histories of anthropology, Samoan studies, Samoa, or American culture has still not been fixed. It is, therefore, a good time to reflect upon its significance.

I

Let's first recall the event. The weeks following the appearance of the *New York Times* story were uncomfortable ones for professional anthropologists. It was difficult for us to walk across any campus in the

ROY A. RAPPAPORT, professor of anthropology at the University of Michigan, is the author of *Pigs for the Ancestors: Ritual in the Ecology of a New Guinea People* and *Ecology, Meaning, and Religion*. He is president-elect of the American Anthropological Association.

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United States without being accosted by economists, physicists, and historians who wanted to know what we thought about Freeman's book. They all, it seemed, assumed that anthropology had been thrown into some sort of crisis by it. Most of us had difficulty reacting. For one thing, the book was not yet available. For another, few of us had looked at *Coming of Age in Samoa* since our own undergraduate days. As Robert Levy put it in his review in *Science* (May 20, 1983), "Whatever [Mead's] . . . importance to a many-headed, vigorously developing present-day anthropology may prove to have been in some future retrospect, neither her theory nor her method nor her data are at the center of current discussion—which is not to belittle her enormous contribution to the organization, vitality, and morale of the profession during her lifetime."

Margaret Mead and Samoa, when it did finally appear, argued that *Coming of Age in Samoa* was shot through with errors of fact and dead wrong in its conclusions. Mead had portrayed the Samoan society of 1925–26 as generally casual, one in which premarital sexual behavior was relatively free and easy and in which adolescence, for most people, lacked the Sturm und Drang typical of coming-of-age in America. It was a society in which "excessive emotions, violent preferences, strong allegiances are disallowed" and where, consequently, people learn not to become too heavily invested in any relationship, even that of parent and child, nor, for that matter, to feel very deeply or strongly about anything. It was a society, according to Mead, in which the desire to excel was the "most disliked trait," competitiveness was minimized, and psychological maladjustment was rare.

Freeman, in contradiction, marshaled evidence based upon his own six years of fieldwork, as well as on the observations of others, to show that Samoan society is not at all casual but is, rather, obsessed by rank and etiquette; that it is strongly repressive; that repression frequently gives way to violence; that crimes of violence are frequent, with rape prominent among them; that the punishment of children is often harsh; that premarital sexual behavior, far from being free and easy, is dominated by a cult of virginity; that Samoans are highly competitive and aggressive; and that mental illness is common.

These generalizations and the observations supporting them are materials from which an ethnography very different from Mead's could have been constructed, but quite deliberately was not. Freeman was at pains to make clear that he was "not intent on constructing an alternative ethnography of Samoa" but on "scientifically refuting" Mead's key assertions. Such a refutation, he claimed, follows Karl Popper (to whom his book is dedicated) in advancing scientific knowledge through "the critical method of error elimination," a method based on the view that it

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is impossible to justify logically the truth claim of *any* empirical hypothesis but logically possible (and often relatively easy) to falsify all of them. (There is no way to "prove" the hypothesis "Polar bears are white," but *one* negative instance falsifies it.) In the Popperian view, therefore, science can only advance through the enunciation of hypotheses, the bolder the better, which everyone should then attempt to overthrow.

Freeman took the differences between his observations and conclusions and Mead's to be irreconcilable, accounting for them in two general ways. First, he judged her fieldwork to have been incompetent: her time in the field was, he said, too short; her knowledge of the Samoan language was inadequate; she chose not to live in a Samoan household while there; and he believed her to have been duped by her informants. Furthermore, he believed that she was inadequately prepared for her first fieldwork by her mentors, Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict.

The second ground Freeman alleged for Mead's errors was more interesting. He argued that both her observations and her conclusions were not merely limited by the inadequacies of the theory under which they were made but were distorted by its errors. Freeman claimed that the central tenet of this "theory," which he called "The Boasian Paradigm," was "the notion that human behavior can be explained in *purely* cultural terms" (my italics)—that is, without reference to or assumptions concerning, or even in denial of, the place of any biological processes in that behavior. Elsewhere he referred to this position as "a doctrine of extreme cultural determinism" and indicated in his preface that his attempt to unmake Mead's myth of Samoa was part of a larger project, the undoing of "the wider myth of absolute cultural determinism, and with arguing that this now antiquated doctrine should be abandoned in favor of a more scientific paradigm," one that has room for biological as well as cultural factors in explaining human behavior.

Freeman alleged that the doctrine of "absolute cultural determinism," which misled Mead and which, he claims, has plagued American anthropology for the past seventy years, developed as an overreaction on the part of anthropologists to the extreme hereditarian position of the eugenicists against whom they were pitted in the bitter "nature-nurture" controversy of the second and third decades of the century. Within this controversy, he argued, Mead's account of Samoa took on wider significance. On the first page of his book Freeman stated:

> Adolescence was known in America and Europe as a time of emotional stresses and conflicts. If, Mead argued, these problems were caused by the biological processes of maturation, then they would necessarily be found in all human

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societies. But in Samoa, she reported, life was easy and casual, and adolescence was the easiest and most pleasant time of life. Thus in anthropological terms, according to Mead, Samoa was a "negative instance"—and the existence of this one counterexample demonstrated [in an adumbration of Popper's method] that the disturbances associated with adolescence in the United States and elsewhere had cultural and not biological causes. In the controversy between the adherents of biological determinism and cultural determinism . . . at its height in the 1920s, Mead's negative instance appeared to be a triumphant outcome for believers in the sovereignty of culture.

Freeman argued that *Coming of Age in Samoa* provided the ethnographic foundation upon which the doctrine of "absolute cultural determinism" stands and that its refutation would topple that doctrine and clear the way for a more scientific anthropology, presumably constructed along lines he sketched in the last brief chapter of his book. There he urged anthropology to adopt a view of evolution in which "*the genetic and exogenetic* [cultural] *are distinct but interacting parts of a single system*" (emphasis his), noting that "specific cultural behaviors, to be understood adequately, need to be related to the phylogenetically given impulses in reference to which they have evolved, and in opposition to which they survive as shared modes of socially inherited adaptation."

If anthropologists had been inclined in the winter of 1983 to scoff at suggestions that their discipline had been thrown into crisis by the Freeman book, they were not so confident later that spring. With, or very soon after, the book's publication, articles about it began to appear in such national mass circulation journals as *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and in more specialized magazines, such as *Natural History* and *Smithsonian*. The daily press carried simplified versions of Freeman's contentions to many times more readers than those sufficiently interested and well-to-do to pay twenty dollars for his book, and his appearances on national television programs brought to additional millions the word that Margaret Mead was being discredited.

If anthropology was not thrown into public disrepute, it was shadowed by public doubt. As the *Denver Post* stated on February 15 in an editorial entitled "Anthropological Crisis":

This is more than just another academic teapot tempest; anthropology is a science often accused of being a haven for social theorists manipulating facts to prove their preconceived points. . . . Mead . . . made major contributions to U.S. social attitudes. Her reputation is secure. The real loser may be anthropology's reputation as a science. If its methods haven't made quantum jumps forward since Mead's day, the whole discipline might find a better home in creative literature.

The generation of a crisis in the public's confidence in anthropology, and consequently in anthropology's influence (such as it ever was) on

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public affairs or public opinion, may have been an unavoidable side effect of a scientific attempt to overthrow what Freeman called "The Boasian Paradigm." But his comments to Jane Howard, one of Mead's biographers, at least suggest that he counted on embarrassing American anthropology (as well as discrediting Mead) among the rewards of his enterprise. Two years prior to the publication of his book, Howard reports in *Smithsonian*, Freeman had predicted that his book might cause Mead's reputation to "do a thirty-two," a phrase referring to the rate at which the velocity of falling bodies accelerates. He later wrote to Howard: "I rather suppose that I may have written a book that will create the greatest denouement in the history of anthropology so far, not excepting Piltdown Man!" In a telephone interview around the time of publication, Howard reports him to have said: "I have succeeded, haven't I, in staggering the [American anthropological] establishment."

It depends upon what Freeman meant by "staggering." If, as his Piltdown remark implied, he meant that he had, so to speak, knocked American anthropological theory off its factual underpinnings, his claim was not only an immodest exaggeration of the importance of his own book but an inflated judgment of the enduring theoretical significance of *Coming of Age in Samoa*. If he simply meant that he had succeeded in getting the goats of a good many American anthropologists, he could not have been more correct. In an early review in the *New York Times*, which appeared on March 27, 1983, George Marcus declared Freeman's book to be "a work of great mischief," and the preponderance of American anthropologists agreed.

Anthropologists' anger was at least as much a reaction to the manner of the book's publication as a reaction to the book's contents. Accustomed to the sedate pace of academic disputation—at least a year, usually more like two, elapses between the publication of a book and the appearance of its reviews in the professional journals—and more or less comfortable in what they believed the world regards as exotic subject matter, anthropologists were astonished by the attention their discipline was suddenly receiving, disconcerted by the tone of much of it, and, quite simply, outraged by the professionally orchestrated hype that apparently animated it and defined its object as scandalous. Here, for example, is a portion of David Schneider's review in the June 1983 issue of *Natural History*:

> This is a bad book. It is also a dull book. To make matters worse, the book has been promoted in ways that seem to me to have precluded whatever useful, serious discussion it might have provoked. I do not know whether the publisher should take the burden of the responsibility for this or whether the author shares a large part of the responsibility by virtue of the inflammatory statements he has made to the media. I do know that I was invited to discuss Freeman's work with

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him on a television show and also on a radio show, hardly suitable situations for the thoughtful discussion of scientific matters. But the real trouble with the hype . . . is that the problems the book purports to deal with have been oversimplified, distorted and sensationalized. Thus, instead of a work of scholarly significance, the book is now a media event.

. . . If Freeman wants his book to be remembered and discussed as the book that said Mead made errors in reporting Samoan ethnography . . . he has succeeded, even though this has long been known throughout the profession.

Provoked, possibly, by a prepublication draft of Schneider's review or by similar reactions from others, Joy Pratt, then the director of publicity at Harvard University Press, responded in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* of May 11, 1983:

Academics don't understand publishing. . . . We have a responsibility to make money and generate sales for books as well as publish books with something important to say.

What shocks me about the reaction to the book is the scholars who say Mead was a great humanitarian and scholar, and it's mean to publish a nasty book about her. . . . Whatever became of scholarship and looking for truth?

. . . People say it's been known in the field for years that Mead made mistakes in interpreting Samoa, but the general public hasn't known that.

Questions about the very nature of Freeman's book are raised by this confrontation. Schneider's remarks suggest that his understanding of *Margaret Mead and Samoa* is, curiously, closer to Freeman's than is Pratt's. Schneider seems to accept Freeman's claim that the book (however bad and dull he deemed it) is an attempt at scientific refutation, a form of discourse for which its mode of promotion was inappropriate. Pratt seems to justify the book not so much as a contribution to anthropological scholarship as an attempt to disseminate to a wider public what anthropologists already knew. In her interpretation, the ways in which the book was promoted were quite appropriate, the book and its promotion inseparable.

Whatever Freeman's intentions may have been, Joy Pratt's understanding of the book's nature and significance was, I think, closer to the mark than Schneider's. For one thing, the book was not addressed to a scholarly audience but to the social descendants of the readership of *Coming of Age in Samoa*. Although its promotion irritated anthropologists, it would be a serious mistake to dismiss the book's significance as no more than the media's creation. The play given to it in the press and on television indicated journalists' judgments of public interest in its contents, and the journalists, it turns out, were right. *Margaret Mead and Samoa* may not be a major contribution to the anthropological under-

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standing of Samoa, to the elucidation of the relationship between biology and culture, or to the improvement of anthropological method and theory, but its publication was, nevertheless, a cultural event of genuine importance. Public excitement arose because *Coming of Age in Samoa* had been a significant book and Margaret Mead a significant public figure. If anthropologists were surprised by the stir, it was because they had forgotten, if indeed they had ever fully understood, either the public significance of *Coming of Age in Samoa* or the nature of Margaret Mead's public status.

II

Freeman claimed that *Coming of Age in Samoa* recounts a myth. I agree with him and would suggest that his book generated excitement not because it constituted a scientific refutation but because it was, as its subtitle makes explicit, an attempt to invalidate an important myth. The two are not one and the same.

Although Freeman may be correct in construing *Coming of Age in Samoa* to be mythic, his conception of myth, which is never made explicit, seems deficient. Certain popular senses of myth do seem implicit. A myth is "a notion based more on tradition . . . than on fact," "a fiction or half-truth forming part of the ideology of a society," or even an out-and-out fabrication, an "imaginary story, explanation, person or thing," according to the *American Heritage Dictionary* (1979). Myths so understood are in their very nature errors, mystifications, or even lies. According to Freeman, "the main conclusions of *Coming of Age in Samoa* are, in reality, the figments of an anthropological myth," a fabrication that his hard sharp facts have shredded.

"Myth" for Freeman is pejorative, a species of untruth that rigorous science dispels. But richer senses of the term are also current, and something must be said about them. Myths are accounts bearing upon the origin and nature of the world's proper order and upon actions that conform to, and thus realize, that order (and as such are moral) or that violate and undo that order (and are, ipso facto, immoral). Myths tend to concentrate on issues that are cognitively or ethically problematic and to deal with matters that are ambiguous, contradictory, and that can generate ambivalence—for instance, the need both to fulfill and to constrain sexual drives.

Although analysts of myth usually treat each text as discrete, the myths of any society are usually loosely joined into a more or less coherent *mythos*, which, in its entirety, expresses or represents that society's *Logos* (its conception of the world's moral and natural order) and how it came to be.

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The orders represented in myth are both natural and conventional, but often myths soften or even deny the distinction between the naturally constituted and the conventionally (that is, culturally) constructed. Among the Walbiri people of central Australia, for instance, the heroes of the primordial but ever-continuing time called "The Dreaming" created hills, pools, plants, rituals, marriage rules, and kinship terms all in the same way: by uttering their names in song. As the heroes journey across the previously featureless world, they sing into being its forms, its essences, its distinctions, the multitude of natural and cultural things it holds. In being created in the same way and at the same time as trees and rocks, the rite of subincision, for example, becomes as apparently natural as those trees and rocks. To claim that a convention is no mere custom but is given by nature is, of course, to deny its arbitrary character. It is founded upon ground that lies beyond need for much, or even any, defense. Nature, simply because it *is*, requires little justification. Insofar as the representation of the conventional as natural is one of its common features, the grounding of convention is intrinsic to myth.

Myths may seem to naturalize conventions, but they do not provide descriptions of the world as it is. Rather, they present enduring models, always idealized, against which current states of the world can be judged. In telling of the world before some fall, as many myths do, they do not describe what *is* but recount what *was*, and in recounting what *was*, they stipulate what *should be*. The state of the world, that is, should correspond to a state stipulated, implicitly or explicitly, in the myth; but if the world did in fact correspond there would be no need for the myth. Although it recounts the past, myth is oriented to the future, inspiring actions that transform what should be into what is.

Questions are raised concerning myth's epistemic and ontological status. In contradiction of the usage that takes myth to designate accounts that "prove" empirically to be false, ultimate truth is claimed for, or by, myth understood as the representation of *Logos*, the world's proper order. The "ultimate truth" of myth is, clearly, neither the necessary truth of logic nor the empirical truth of science. Whereas internal consistency is the criterion of necessary truth and factuality is the criterion of empirical truth, propriety or morality, perhaps represented as an aspect of the natural or necessary order of things, is the criterion of mythic truth. Where there is disparity between fact—observable states of affairs—and the truth of myth, it is fact that is wrong. Physical facts themselves may even be understood to be lies or something like them. In Zoroastrian Persia, for example, the word *druj* designated both lies in the ordinary sense and acts, such as rebellion against the Sassanid emperors, that violated *Asha*, the world's proper order. *Asha* also glosses as "truth" and is the name of one of the persons

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of the Zoroastrian Godhead (Duchesne-Guillemin, 1966). In Vedic India there was a corresponding opposition between *anrta*, denoting lie, chaos, and dereliction of duty versus *rta*, denoting duty, order, truth.

If the truth of myth can be demonstrated neither by reference to the world's observable condition nor by rigorous logic, upon what does it stand? The matter is involved and ramifying and can be discussed only briefly here.

First, the accounts that make up the enduring core of any *mythos* are not only about extraordinary events but are themselves extraordinary. Some core myths seem to the living to have come down from time immemorial, and their origins are easily attributed to the times of origin of which they tell. In recounting the primordial, they themselves become Primordial Word. Others are brought to peoples at times known to history by prophets who have received them as visions, revealing to humankind eternal truths for the first time.

But the truth claims of myth stand upon more than the persuasive capacities of antiquity and revelation. Being neither necessary nor empirical truths, the truths of myth constitute a sub-class of a third major category at least as important in human affairs: the category of conventional truths, truths that are validated by their acceptance by a community. That core myths are often expressed in ritual is salient in this regard, for, as I have argued at length in my own book, *Ecology, Meaning and Religion* (1979), participation in a ritual is a formal act of acceptance of whatever is represented in that ritual. Ritual acceptance does not guarantee compliance with whatever directives may be implied or explicit in the order encoded in the ritual, nor does it even entail the subjective state of belief in them. Acceptance is a public act, visible to the performer and others, constituting an agreement that the order represented in the ritual is legitimate, and as such embodies criteria against which the events of an errant world, *including the behavior of the acceptor*, can rightly be judged.

That core myths are represented in ritual and in scripture, both media of religious discourse, suggests that mythic truth is a species of the genus of conventional truth for which the designation "truth of sanctity" may be used. Its source may be in ritual, but, in its flow from ultimate sacred postulates, such as creeds, expressed in ritual, to other texts, sanctity—the essence of which is a generalized unquestionableness that assumes, in particular contexts, the more specific forms of truth, propriety, morality, legitimacy, or correctness—may escape from religious discourse altogether. If, to use a crass but perhaps apposite example, the United States is "one nation under God," a God in whom we trust and whom we accept in weekly acts of worship, and if, as Calvin Coolidge, sworn in the name of God into our highest office, said, "The business of

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America is business," then business is highly sanctified. And, if business is sanctified, so is what is called "the Horatio Alger Myth."

This discussion suggests that myth may suffuse a society's literature and its oral tradition. But it is, perhaps, more accurate to put the matter inversely: Literature, oral tradition, popular culture, and discourse of all sorts, including that of the sciences, continually generate materials that may be assimilated into a society's mythic corpus.

I speak of the "assimiliation" or "incorporation" of narratives or other materials into a *mythos*. Myths are seldom, if ever, composed as such. Myth is a status conferred by a public upon some, but not all, texts. Horatio Alger did not write myth. He wrote light inspirational novels for boys, and the ethos behind these novels became myth. Margaret Mead wrote an ethnographic account of adolescent girls in Samoa to which she appended a discussion of education in America. When this account entered the consciousness of an American public, that public canonized it. Freeman is correct in construing *Coming of Age in Samoa* as mythic but wrong in labeling it an "anthropological myth." It became an American myth. Anthropology is no more capable of establishing the mythic status of narratives than is chemistry. All anthropology can do is to offer to a public accounts from which that public can select some (as it can from other sources) to establish as myth, leaving the rest to anthropologists' arcane in-house conversations.

Why the status of myth is conferred upon some narratives or expositions and not upon others is not well understood. Accounts so elevated both represent themes and values preserved in the mythic core and objectify tendencies, trends, and dilemmas that are developing in contemporary society but still struggling for influence, legitimacy, or even clear recognition or expression. Those selected for elevation, this is to say, bind immediate, vital, changeable, and not yet well-established or generally accepted social concerns, attitudes, practices, or movements to enduring, or even eternal, values and understandings. In such transactions new vitality is breathed into sacred and sanctified conceptions by the immediacy of the contemporary concerns and movements with which they are associated; at the same time, legitimacy or even sanctity is conferred upon those concerns and movements through their connection to core myths and the values they encode.

Not all recitals of the incarnation of ancient values in current events are granted the status of myth, however. There are two other possible prerequisites. First, the contemporary material mythicized must be of passionate, and not merely intellectual, concern to its public. Emotions must be engaged and behavior affected. Such engagement is encouraged and nourished by moral controversy, which leads to the second prerequisite. At the same time that enduring *general values* are reaffirmed and

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revitalized, the accounts to be beatified may have to support, advocate, or effect the defense, modification, or replacement of the more *specific* conventions on which contemporary behavior proceeds. The incorporation of a new text into a *mythos* is, therefore, something like an ideological equivalent of a paradigm modification or change in science.

We may, in this light, consider *Coming of Age in Samoa.* It had a head start, so to speak, in the competition for canonization; it was an account of a part of the world that had long had a place in Western fantasies, at least those of males. Earlier accounts of the South Seas Idyll had offered only dreams of escape from the constraints of Western society, not moral principles bearing upon society's deficiencies, as did *Coming of Age in Samoa.* Mead's ethnographic chapters offered, to a society in which adolescence seemed especially trying, an account of a society in which adolescence was much easier for most people. To a society struggling toward more permissive conventions of sex and more egalitarian relations between men and women, Mead's book offered a picture of relatively carefree sexuality, making that vision of sexual emancipation available not only to young men but to young women at a time when the double standard held tacit sway. (Think how different would have been the significance to Americans of a *Coming of Age in Samoa* that focused upon the sexual activities of adolescent males.) The didactic chapters of Mead's book attempted to draw conclusions from the "main lesson" of the ethnography—"that adolescence is not necessarily a time of stress and strain but that cultural conditions make it so."

The Edenic description of island life from which this lesson was drawn may have led readers to draw a further mythic lesson: that the Samoan condition was one of either nature or of grace and that the contemporary American condition represented a fall into a state either unnatural or sinful or both. Mead said or implied no such thing; and, if it is characteristic of myth to represent the specifically cultural or conventional as both natural and sacred, her conclusions were anti-mythic. She understood "the main lesson" of her ethnography to be "that our own ways are not humanly inevitable nor God-ordained, but are the fruit of a long and turbulent history." Therefore, "we may well examine in turn all of our institutions, thrown into strong relief against the history of other civilizations, and weighing them in the balance, be not afraid to find them wanting."

The final chapter of Mead's book amounts to a manifesto in which she argued that education in contemporary society must fit children for choice rather than conformity. Such an education requires them to be taught "how to think not what to think." No one of the many ways open to children is "sanctioned above its alternative," and, this being the case, they must be taught tolerance. These prescriptions were not imported

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directly from Samoa but were derived from a comparison of aspects of Samoan and American society.

I have suggested that texts assimilated into a mythic corpus reaffirm and revitalize enduring *general* values at the same time that they legitimize changes in *specific* conventions—rules, usages, understandings—by which social life is assessed or even regulated. *Coming of Age in Samoa* proposes that American conventions of socialization be changed not only to adapt better to specific changes occurring in our culturally heterogeneous society but to adapt also to the condition of unremitting change itself. The enduring values and understandings at once underwriting these changes and represented by them are patent—an assumption of the plasticity of human nature, a belief in the perfectability of humanity and in humanity's ability to improve the natural and social condition of the world, a belief in freedom of individual choice. All of this obviously conforms closely to a main line of American ideology descending from the Declaration of Independence. *Coming of Age in Samoa* was sanctified by its association with general values stipulated in America's founding document (itself highly sanctified because the very act of national creation was viewed as expressive of the "Laws of Nature and Nature's God"). The radical changes in specific conventions that Mead expounded were implicitly represented as *conservative* of those general values under changed circumstances.

For the audience that originally made *Coming of Age in Samoa* a best-seller, its account of an alternative to American sexual mores was, possibly, a revelation and its proposals for change no mere pieties. Falling short of setting out a specific social program, the book constituted a text of liberation, a myth of enlarged human possibilities. For later readers, the book was even more charged with meaning. If in 1928 the audience was mainly adult and educated, most of those who came later were, at the time of their reading of Mead's book, not long, or not yet, out of adolescence themselves and still passionately engaged in the struggles with which Mead was concerned. The book enjoyed substantial classroom adoptions for decades, and most readers during the past fifty years have probably been undergraduates still wrestling with the possibilities laid before them by their complex society and still agonizing about sex more than enjoying it. This is the public that, in the course of time, confirmed the mythic status of *Coming of Age in Samoa.*

Anthropology, then, particularly in the person of Margaret Mead, provided a source of mythic materials to American society during the late 1920s and 1930s, but it was hardly a sole supplier. In complex societies there are always many texts vying for mythic hegemony, and sciences other than anthropology were providing some of them.

A lively commerce between psychoanalysis and classics had been

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prospering for years, offering to an educated public a complex and highly sexual view of human nature, a view naturalized and legitimated—if not, indeed, sanctified—by its association with mythic figures from the lores of ancient Greece, ancient Israel, and even from a fantastic primal horde. Economics, for its part, had long since provided a more general public with another mythical representation of human nature: the chimerical *Homo economicus*. This golem of economic theory, sanctified by its association with Calvinistic Protestantism, remains, it could be argued, hegemonic in Western societies.

And then there was biology. Eugenics offered materials from which could be spun a myth very different from that based upon Mead's account of Samoa. The "main lessons" of Mead's text were mythically atypical; they asserted that no society's conventions are either humanly inevitable or God-ordained, that they are neither direct and unalterable expressions of human nature nor ineluctably sacred. Further, they are atypical in assuming that the plasticity of human nature is such that any normal individual has the genetic capacity to be socialized adequately into any culture. The main lesson of the eugenicists' accounts was more typical of myth; it represented the conventions of every society as natural inasmuch as they are understood to emerge out of, or to be determined by, the genetic particularities of each society's members. Differences in the conventions and achievements of different societies are to be accounted for in genetic terms. Further, societies differ in the vices and virtues their members possess, and these, too, are hereditary. Thus, according to one leading eugenicist, Charles B. Davenport, Germans are naturally "thrifty, intelligent and honest, with a love of art and music, including that of song birds," while "there is no question that . . . Jews . . . with their intense individualism and ideals of gain at the cost of any interest, represent the opposite extreme from the early English and more recent Scandinavian immigration with their ideals of community life in the open country, advancement by the sweat of the brow, and the uprearing of families in the fear of God and the love of Community." (This is in Davenport's *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics*, 1911.)

The culture of the group or class within which the myth was current—persons of northern European ancestry—and the character traits of its membership were not only represented as naturally different from those of other groups but naturally superior to them. It followed that, being lodged in their genes, the cultural and moral deficiencies of Slavs, Jews, southern Europeans, Orientals, and, of course, all darker peoples were irremediable, and that the way toward improved social conditions could not be through education or social action but through the improvement of human stock through selective breeding.

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III

The excitement attending the publication of *Margaret Mead and Samoa* was in part a reaction to the profanation of a sanctified text, the contents of which had been transformed by mythic acceptance from the status of radical conceptions to tacit assumptions. I do not think, however, that these understandings—of human plasticity and perfectibility, of the freedom of convention from all genetic limitations except those common to humankind as a whole, of the value of education for choice, of the possibility and desirability of increased sexual freedom—were threatened by Freeman's criticism of Mead. Any *mythos* is redundant. Other texts represent the same conceptions, and the possibility of increased sexual freedom, particularly for the young, has long since become a reality. In the absence of research, I can only suggest that much of the excitement did not reflect liberal consternation arising from threatened assumptions, but rather the welcoming pleasure of others, unsympathetic to liberal values and opposed to the programs of social amelioration they enjoined, who (correctly or not) assumed Freeman led an important assault upon the factual grounds of those liberal assumptions.

But, if the uproar arose in part from the possible implications of Freeman's critique of an important American myth, it was also a response to the assault on Mead herself. Some reviewers were indignant at Freeman's failure to publish his critique during Mead's lifetime, at least the part of it that he had been circulating for years in mimeographed form. And there were surely those who took unprejudiced delight in the spectacle of the high and mighty, whatever they stood for, being "knocked off their pedestals" or "cut down to size."

But Mead was no mere celebrity, no ordinary scientific authority or political pundit. Her status was very special. If *Coming of Age in Samoa* constituted a myth and if myths are not only about extraordinary events but are themselves extraordinary, then those who reveal them are also extraordinary. Matthew, Mark, Isaiah, Moses—all were inspired by God. The texts these men of God gave to us are core myths, subsequently enshrined in an unchanging scripture accepted again every Sabbath. *Coming of Age in Samoa* is only a contingent myth, not ultimately sacred but merely sanctified through its association with core myths and, unlike them, relatively transient. Nevertheless, if Mead's vision of Samoa became a myth, she, by reflexive logic and analogy to other prophets, became holy. As the status of shamans is established and validated by the accounts they bring back from journeys to other worlds, so Mead's status as a Holy Woman was established by her revelation of Samoa and

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validated by subsequent journeys to the other worlds of New Guinea and Bali.

The shamanic metaphor is not farfetched. It is difficult now to remember just how distant and inaccessible places like Samoa were in the 1920s. Then, even more than now, the public, insofar as it was aware of ethnography at all, understood that ethnographers, in effect, leave this world to dwell among people "still living in the stone age," living, that is, like our own remote ancestors. So ethnographers, like shamans, not only made out-of-the-world journeys, they walked among the dead.

The peculiar nature of their method may also confer special status upon ethnographers. Like other scientists, they collect data through operations that may include surveys and other forms of measurement as well as objective observations of behavior. But there is more to the task than that. At the same time that the ethnographer is constructing an "outsider's knowledge" of the society, he or she must develop an "insider's knowledge" of the meanings that motivate its members. Such knowledge is obtained through procedures that typically include language learning and symbolic interpretation, that entail some participation in the community's social life, and that may resemble ways in which sacred knowledge is acquired more than the ways in which scientific research is usually conducted. Fieldwork resembles a protracted rite of passage, and ethnographers sometimes joke about its similarity to the vision quests of Native Americans. The public is, I believe, dimly aware of this aspect of ethnography, perhaps in romantically distorted ways, but aware nonetheless. It may be that, because of the nature of ethnographic knowledge and the way in which it is obtained, ethnographers are, in the public mind, more eligible for sanctified status than other social scientists.

In spite of the formal resemblance of ethnographic field trips to shamanic flights and of field research to rites of initiation, all but a few ethnographers have been spared sanctified status and its attendant burdens because very few of them have returned from their journeys with messages of interest to the general public. The accounts most ethnographers bring back do not escape from anthropology to enter into the discourse of the society at large. Mead, however, did find a public voice and a public audience early in her career with *Coming of Age in Samoa*, the text that elevated her to the status of Holy Woman.

She periodically reconfirmed this status through other journeys to other worlds, always returning with new messages for the general public. Lola Romanucci-Ross, who worked with Mead in Manus in the 1950s and 1960s, tells us that she, unlike the preponderance of other ethnographers,

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went into a field situation to find an answer to a question of vast importance to the times. . . . To give some examples of Mead's approach: the answer to sex and repression was to be found in Samoa; to the high cost of stereotyping sex roles, in New Guinea; to dilemmas of child-rearing in Bali.

Mead saw herself as an educator, according to Romanucci-Ross, in whose view she was

a mythmaker in the best and most profound sense of the word. Myths are morality tales embodying the most basic predictions that people *can* become what they "ought" to a remarkable degree. In the late 1920's: if parents could only believe that repression is . . . pathology inducing! . . . In the 1950's: if administrators could only believe that rapid culture change works! . . . Mead, as a muse of the clinical experience on the outposts of Western Empires, found "instancings" of these possibilities. She had every confidence that somewhere along the way she would be proven correct.

I have already said that anthropologists cannot themselves grant mythic status to morality tales or any other narratives. Whether Margaret Mead constructed her texts with mythopoesis consciously in mind is not something we can know. Be this as it may, the elevated status conferred upon her following her return from Samoa made accounts brought back from her subsequent journeys likely candidates for mythopoesis, and, at the same time, their authorship revalidated her status as a Holy Woman.

She did not, however, confine herself to bringing us Good News from the South Seas. She spent the sanctified authority she won through journeys to other worlds in the controversies of this one. Speaking as a Holy Woman in a tone of voice that never seemed to betray any uncertainty about anything, she continued all her life to tell the world all manner of things for its own good—about relations between the sexes and the generations, for instance, and the legalization of marijuana. To the extent that these issues were controversial, they profaned her, but she could always replenish her sanctity by another journey into the wilderness. And so she became a unique cultural institution, our own national oracle who, the joke went, when visiting her senior colleague at Delphi, asked, "What was it you wanted to know?" In November 1978 hundreds of newspapers observed her death not only in their obituaries and on their front pages but in editorials with such headlines as: "More than a Scientist," "Grandmother to Us All," "World Loses Margaret Mead," "Farewell to a Matron Saint." She was a Holy Woman, and much of the excitement following the publication of Freeman's book was a reaction to her desecration.

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IV

Myths are by their nature invulnerable to direct falsification, but they can be invalidated by the withdrawal of acceptance. The acceptance of myths based upon ethnographic description may be shaken or dissolved by the exposure of errors in that ethnography. I have already indicated that I do not think that the "main lessons" Mead derived from her vision of Samoa and her comparison of that vision with American society of the 1920s have been endangered by Freeman's book. For example, knowledge that ontogeny is differently managed with different emotional and cognitive effect among different peoples is based upon observations made in hundreds of societies. Nevertheless, as the *Denver Post*'s editorial quoted earlier indicates, issues of public confidence and ethnographic authority were raised by Freeman's critique.

That Mead's fieldwork as an apprentice provided less than a full account of Samoan life, or even life in Manu'a, and that it contained errors have long been known among anthropologists. Mead herself came to recognize that she had overgeneralized from her Manu'an girls to the whole of Samoan culture, character, and society. In addition to those already noted, the grounds of her book's deficiencies were several. The matters she focused upon had hardly been studied before and turned out to be more elusive than she or anyone else had imagined; her assumption that "a trained student can master the fundamental structure of a primitive society in a few months" was naive; and the theory guiding her, not Freeman's "Boasian Paradigm" but an early version of Ruth Benedict's configurationalism, was inadequate. Nevertheless, Polynesianists other than Freeman agree that, although Mead did not give us the "whole truth" (no single ethnography could), she did not get it all wrong either. Lowell Holmes, for instance, states that his review of psychometric research in Samoa agreed more with Mead's characterization of Samoan personality than with Freeman's. Robert Levy, a psychiatrist as well as anthropologist, noted in *Science* that

> many careful studies of other parts of Polynesia, which differ from Samoa in social forms and post-contact (with Europe and American) histories and political situations, show the casual, non-violent, non-striving, present-oriented, sexually relatively casual ethos that Mead overgeneralized and misplaced in the description of Samoa to be in fact a dominant and valued cultural style, albeit a style often conflicted, defended and built out of recalcitrant (both biological and social) materials. Thus Mead . . . was able to see and to allow some Samoans to show her something about Polynesian culture that Freeman could not. Freeman's blind spots and areas of clearer vision are different from Mead's. The problem, as graduate students know, is one of context, and the nature of the observer as part of that context.

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Other commentators have delineated some of these contextual differences. Freeman's six years in Samoa were spread over a forty-one-year period, beginning in 1940, fourteen years after Mead left Samoa. His fieldwork and hers were conducted in parts of the archipelago with differing colonial histories. Freeman, a grown man holding a chiefly title, had unimpeded and relatively casual access to classes of informants very different and socially remote from the girls among whom Mead concentrated her efforts. She was largely concerned with the actual sexual behavior of adolescent girls in outlying islands, Freeman with an ideology of sex held publicly by elite adults.

A number of reviewers have noted Freeman's selective use of evidence. Holmes tells us:

> In *Margaret Mead and Samoa* I am either cited or quoted twenty-six times, but primarily in regard to my criticisms of Mead. . . . However, the fact that in 1954 I found the village of Ta'u and its inhabitants much as Mead had described them is not mentioned. . . . He quotes Ronald Rose's assertions that Samoan mannerisms imply aggressive tendencies (which help to build his case . . .) but completely ignores such statements by Rose as "If a girl hasn't had a succession of lovers by the time she is eighteen she feels she is 'on the shelf' and becomes the laughing stock among her companions."

There are also strong possibilities that Freeman made some serious errors himself and that he did not always live up to the rigorous scientific standards to which he held the young Margaret Mead accountable. His "data" on the incidence of virginity are especially remarkable. He impeached Mead as the likely dupe of her young informants, who, he suspects, fabricated tales of sexual adventure for her edification and their own amusement; then he explains that he himself conducted "a detailed survey" of the incidence of virginity in adolescent girls by making, with the assistance of his wife, a census of all the young females from a village on the south coast of Upolu, born within the period of 1945–1955, and he provides detailed tabulated results. But he says nothing about how he ascertained who was and who was not a virgin. Physical inspections? By whom? Interviews? Of whom? As David Schneider observed in his review, devising a practical and reliable method for determining virginity is no simple matter, especially when, as Freeman contends, the society's authority figures are publicly committed to the Christian ideal of premarital chastity. In the absence of such information, we have no reason to believe Freeman's data are better than Mead's or, for that matter, of any value at all.

Other instances of dubious methodology have possibly been more mischievous because, being less flagrant, reviewers have let them pass. There is, for instance, the matter of guilt. In contradiction of Mead's claim that there is "no room for guilt" in Samoa, Freeman reports that

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"Samoans are keenly aware of guilt, which . . . they are frequently called upon to confess to those in authority." He provides the example of "an untitled man who had committed the enormity of striking a chief, publicly acknowledging the error of his ways, whereupon the officiating tulafale . . . remarked, 'You are conscious of your guilt, for which we are thankful.' " He also tells of a major ceremony, the *ifoga*, in which those who have wronged others ritually humiliate themselves before them.

The trouble with this account is that, while Mead was using the term *guilt* to refer to a particular affective state, it is by no means clear in the instances Freeman adduces that such a state was experienced by the actors. The untitled man's public confession may have simply been a public acknowledgment of legal culpability. Such acknowledgment need not be attended by the affective state that English speakers call "guilt." The same can be said of the *ifoga* ceremony. A formal procedure to mend a torn social fabric need not be emotionally charged; but if, as Freeman tells us, reasonably enough, these occasions are deeply moving to Samoans, it is just as possible that the operant emotion is not what we call "guilt" but what we call "shame." Or perhaps fear.

Freeman's dubious information on virginity and his crude treatment of the matter of guilt (similar questions may be raised about the range of actions that he calls "rape") point to a more fundamental problem pervading his entire critique. The problem is intrinsic to the application of Popperian falsification to ethnographic accounts and will require some detailed explanation.

Present-day anthropologists generally agree that Mead's account of Samoa was too simple and unidimensional. Bradd Shore suggests that Ruth Benedict's notion of cultural configuration had the effect of simplifying Mead's observations so as to conform to a single dominant theme, stressing (in this case) passivity, obedience, gentleness, and cooperation. The idea, later developed by Benedict in *Patterns of Culture* (1934), was that cultures are something like personalities. Although Mead's observations were richer and more subtle than Benedict's theory could easily accommodate, "her characterization of Samoan ethos was unlikely to be sufficient," Shore remarks, "since neither a personality nor a culture can be sufficiently characterized by unidimensional themes purged of conflicts and contradictions." Insufficient but not necessarily wrong. Her account had much to tell us about Samoa, but not everything—it was "reminiscent," Shore says, " . . . of moments in Samoan life, but not of its multifaceted totality." In detail it is largely correct, but there are not sufficient details to construct an overall pattern in all its complexity. In these respects, Shore observes, "*it is like Freeman's own descriptions*" (emphasis mine).

We come here to the methodological rub of falsification itself. In

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applying the Popperian method of refutation to assertions and observations decontextualized from Mead's account, Freeman produces a picture that could hardly be more than an inversion of hers. In fact, his is a good deal less persuasive simply because it doesn't consider all elements of her description.

The question to ask is: In what sense does Freeman's discussion falsify Mead's? Does he show her observations to have been false, or her interpretations to be erroneous, or does he accomplish something much more modest—namely, to demonstrate that there was more to it than she told us? If his goal was to show her account not to be altogether wrong but one-sided, it would also have been incumbent upon him to face the problem of contradictions, which completion of the picture would make obvious: how, for instance, casual sexuality, a cult of virginity, and high frequencies of various forms of "rape" can coexist in one small society. He does not address this problem, explicitly stating that his aim is simply to refute her. But he really can't get away with this. The term *refutation* tacitly contends that Mead's account is not simply inadequate but erroneous; it also claims that his facts and interpretations are not only correct in detail but are themselves "complete" or "adequate." If this is the case, he has presented us, despite his disclaimers, with an alternative view of Samoa. Where Mead's view emphasized gentleness, cooperation, passivity, and casualness, his view emphasized aggressiveness, prudishness, guilt, and obsession. His account is even more oversimplified than the account to which it is reacting, for, in claiming to be no more than a refutation, it denies itself a unifying structure of its own. It is no more than a heap of observations constituting half-truths.

It is easy to be respectful of Mead's Samoa work, oversimplifications and all. Hers was pioneering research, and she did not come home empty-handed. But what is worthy of respect in a pioneering work is not necessarily to be admired in a critical work published sixty years later. Mead and Freeman, in presenting symmetrically incomplete accounts, are not equally wrong, for her work came first and he has neither advanced that work nor has he completed it, augmented it with anything richer, or replaced it.

There are, of course, senses in which no ethnography is ever replaced. Ethnographies tacitly document the anthropology of their time and, less directly, the condition of the ethnographer's society, as well as the cultures they explicitly describe. Ethnographers are themselves parts of the situations that their ethnographies report, and different ethnographers participate differently in the societies they study. Derek Freeman is not now, nor has he ever been, Margaret Mead. He, as a chief, could speak in the *fono* but could not, as could Mead as a young woman, spend evenings with adolescent girls waiting by the lagoon for

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their lovers. Although an ethnography by Freeman would not replace Mead's, we would expect it, as the product of six years of research conducted at a time when method and theory had advanced, to be richer, deeper, broader, more subtle, and more authoritative in more areas than the one produced in so little time by so young an anthropologist so long ago.

A simple epistemic lesson is to be learned from the failure of Freeman's book to make a contribution to Samoan ethnography commensurate with the time he invested in it and the knowledge he surely has of Samoan society: formal falsification is not an effective method for correcting ethnographic shortcomings. It leads to characterizations as oversimplified—and, thus, as false—as those being falsified.

Formal falsification may also come close to being illusory, either by being too difficult to be practicable or too easy to be meaningful. It demands—although this is not reflected in Freeman's practice—that the statements to be falsified be framed in rigorously falsifiable terms. It also assumes either the irrelevance or constancy of contexts. This requisite may not set insurmountable problems for categorical assertions of such generality that they hold true across all contexts, but with respect to ethnographic data this condition may be very difficult to meet. All ethnographic observations are made in complex contexts that, unlike those in some laboratory experiments, cannot be excluded or even controlled. If, however, statements are fully hedged by context qualifications, their claims may lose so much in generality as to be applicable to no more than particular events. On the other hand, if standards are relaxed to admit into the category of falsifiable statements those as loosely formulated as "The Samoan attitude toward sex is easy-going," other problems arise. For instance, the occurrence of some rape cases, or the presence of a cult of virginity, or frequent moralizing statements by pastors, parents, and village elders—any of these might be taken to contradict that assertion about the Samoan attitudes toward sex. But contradiction is not falsification. How many rape cases would be sufficient to falsify the characterization of Samoan attitudes? One instance would not be enough, especially in light of Vern Carroll's report that rape itself is a rather casual matter in Nukuoro, another Polynesian society. In this respect the generalization about Samoan sexual attitudes is very different from "Polar bears are white," a statement that would be falsified by one black bear. A black polar bear leaves no room for argument. A Samoan rape case does. The statement about polar bears is a catergorical assertion; the one about Samoan sexual attitudes is a vague generalization. Whereas a counter-example unambiguously falsifies the one statement, it merely casts doubt on the adequacy or precision of the other. In the one case we are forced to drop "white" as a defining

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characteristic of polar bears. In the other we are not forced, at least at the outset, to drop casualness as an aspect of Samoan sexual attitudes. Apparent contradictions—such as the coincidence of rape, cults devoted to virginity, cults devoted to the undoing of virginity, and sexual behavior that appears to be free and easy—demand of us an initial attempt to reach for higher or deeper understandings that may reconcile apparently incompatible observations.

It could be argued that the fault here is not so much that of falsification as it is of the literature to which the procedure is applied. Ethnographies are never composed of tightly articulated sets of assertions, each of which is framed in sufficiently rigorous terms to be itself falsifiable, let alone part of a comprehensive account that is falsifiable as an integrated whole. Whether anthropologists should strive to write ethnographies in such a manner is another matter. I myself think not. The increase in formalization requisite to unambiguous falsifiability would exact too high a price in breadth, richness, informativeness, significance, and readability. Rigorous accounts, rich mainly in jargon, about narrowly defined matters of little significance to anyone, might become the order of the day in anthropology, as perhaps they already have in some other social sciences. Such accounts might accommodate a limited number of statements based upon objectively derived data, but they would accommodate with difficulty, or not at all, the hermeneutically derived component of ethnographic knowledge—what I earlier called "inside knowledge."

Good ethnography arises out of the tension between two opposed but mutually dependent endeavors. The one, objective in its method and aspirations and inspired by the sciences, seeks explanation and is concerned to discover causes and, possibly, even laws. The other, subjective in its orientation and influenced by the humanities, attempts interpretation and seeks to illuminate meanings. Ethnography at its best is a richly textured, highly informative, and very complex form that has as much in common with interpretive as with scientific texts. Good ethnographies will likely include some unambiguously falsifiable statements but are never, and should never be, composed entirely of them.

This is not to say that ethnographies are invulnerable to the effects of contradictory data or alternative accounts and interpretations. It is to say that rigorous formal falsification is not possible and that, even in a looser sense, it is no simple matter. The main difference between good ethnography and poor ethnography is not that the former is true and the latter is not. Even poor ethnography usually gets its facts straight. It is that good ethnography illuminates non-obvious aspects of experience and culture; it exposes and possibly accounts for the apparent contradictions that pervade all societies; and it tries to explain why particular

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ways of life have developed where and when they have. The knowledge of humanity that emerges from ethnographies and their comparison does not grow or advance mainly through a program of hypothesis generation and falsification but through a complex process of modification, qualification, confirmation, elaboration, deepening, and synthesizing. The part that out-and-out falsification has to play is a small one.

I am not applying for a special exemption for anthropology from falsification. It isn't necessary. Jonathan Lieberson, following Thomas Kuhn, Imre Lakatos, and others, has observed that even though the technique of falsification has a long history it has never been of great importance in the practice of any science. Even in sciences as "hard" as physics, adverse test results need not always be taken to falsify a generalization but may simply clarify its scope. Moreover, the nature of scientific theories is such that they require auxiliary assumptions to predict observational results. Disconfirming tests may falsify these connecting assumptions rather than the hypotheses. Testing, critics of Popper say, helps us to locate shortcomings in our initial formulations and to correct them, but the claim that falsifiability is the criterion for distinguishing science from non-science is, according to Lieberson, "just a logical toy," simply "one more instance in the depressing attempt of so-called philosophers of science to squeeze and warp the teeming variety of scientific attitudes and inquiries . . . into severe logical calculi and 'rules.'" In light of the dubiety of falsification's methodological validity, Freeman's claims for its usefulness in anthropology are not only scientistic and pretentious but also misleading and destructive.

V

If Freeman's proximate target was Mead's vision of Samoa or, possibly, the public's vision of Mead, his ultimate aim may well have been to discredit her mentor, Franz Boas, and, through him, American anthropology down to this day. The most mischievous chapters of *Margaret Mead and Samoa* have little to do with either Mead or Samoa but with the "frenetic nature-nurture controversy" of the early decades of the century and with its anthropological sequelae. Freeman locates *Coming of Age in Samoa* in that controversy but, as already noted, Mead's account of Samoa does not now, nor has it ever, furnished a significant part of the ethnographic foundation for anthropological theorizing about the relationship between biology and culture. Even if Freeman's critique of Mead were more successful than it in fact is, it would have had little effect upon how that relationship is conceived. Yet Freeman devotes his four most muddled, distorted, and even perverse chapters to this matter.

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Freeman contends that American anthropology followed Boas and his influential early students into the "towering scientific error" of "absolute cultural determinism," the notion "that human behavior can be explained in purely cultural terms." This doctrine, "The Boasian Paradigm," has, he says, debilitated American anthropology since the second decade of the century when it developed as an overreaction to the extreme hereditarian stance of the eugenicists. Freeman sums up the confrontation between the anthropologists and eugenicists with what appears to be a fine impartiality.

> Here, then . . . were two antithetical intellectual and scientific schools—that of Boas and that of Davenport—with neither disposed to explore, in a constructive way, the coexistence and interaction of genetic and exogenetic processes. Instead, the two schools, in Davenport's words, stood opposed, "each viewing the other unkindly." The stage was set for an unrelenting struggle between two doctrines, each insufficient in scientific terms, which had originated amid the theoretical confusions of the late nineteenth century, the one overestimating biology and the other overvaluing culture.

Freeman's account of the controversy is insufficient in historical terms, and his apparent impartiality in assessing it is seriously deficient in critical judgment. It is, in fact, so misleading as to constitute a misrepresentation.

Freeman assesses early twentieth-century eugenics as an "intellectual and scientific school" expounding a doctrine that, it turned out, was simply "insufficient in scientific terms." Yet he himself recognizes that it was not simply a "scientific school" and that the issues over which it contended with anthropology were not simply academic. In the first decade of the century, he explains, eugenics was already being extolled as "a creed of action" by Karl Pearson of Oxford; and Francis Galton, in his Spencer Lecture, "looked forward to a time when . . . it would be possible to proclaim a 'Jehad' or Holy War against customs and prejudices that impair the physical and moral qualities of our race." In America in 1909, Charles B. Davenport told the American Academy of Medicine in an invited lecture at Yale that the committee on eugenics of the American Breeders' Association took the advocacy of legislation to be prominent among its functions.

Legislation favored by eugenicists had three foci. First there was the matter of protecting society from the "hideous serpent of hopelessly vicious protoplasm," that of "idiots, low imbeciles, incurable and dangerous criminals," who should be legally prevented from procreating "either by segregation during the reproductive period or even by sterilization."

Second were laws relating to marriage, especially of marriage be-

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tween members of the black and white races. In a later work, Davenport advocated the prohibition of marriage between whites and persons having "one-half part or more Negro blood." Marriages between whites and persons of one-eighth to one-half Negro blood would be permitted with certificates from state eugenics boards certifying, presumably, that the part-Negro partner was free of undesirable Negro traits. These included "a strong sex instinct without corresponding self-control," "a lack of appreciation of property distinctions," "a certain lack of genuineness—a tendency to pass off clever veneer for the real thing, due to inability or unwillingness to master fundamentals," "a premature cessation of intellectual development." "These unfortunate peculiarities," Davenport declared, "doubtless have a hereditary basis."

Third was the restriction of immigration into the United States from countries that lay outside of northwestern Europe. If the protoplasm of Italians, Greeks, Slavs, Jews, and Orientals was not quite "hopelessly vicious," it was certainly inferior to that of peoples of Germanic origin, and American society needed to be protected from it.

The eugenicists were notably successful. With, as Annette Weiner has noted, "a powerful lobby in the national government, the eugenics movement was instrumental in bringing about such changes as sterilization laws and . . . [new immigration laws, including] the Immigration Restrictive Act of 1924, the most discriminatory immigration regulation that the United States ever enacted." That economic and political interests were hidden behind a protoplasmic ideology may have been indicated by the support given the eugenics movement by members of the Rockefeller, Carnegie, Gould, Kellogg, and Harriman families.

Other early (and quite possibly thoughtless) supporters of the eugenics movement included Winston Churchill, a vice-president of the First International Congress of Eugenics held in England in 1912, and Herbert Hoover, member of the general committee of the Second International Congress, which convened in New York in 1921. With the endorsement of such public figures, the doctrines of eugenics were not only respectable but ipso facto influential.

Freeman recognizes the racist tendencies in the eugenics movement but conveys the impression that they were unfortunate flaws in an otherwise serious, if unsuccessful, scientific enterprise. In view of the movement's respectability and influence, it is important to grasp how deep and virulent its racism actually was. *The Passing of the Great Race*, by Madison Grant, an influential work first published in 1916, is illustrative.

Grant asserted that "the whole tone of American life, social, moral, and political," had been "lowered and vulgarized" by post–Civil War immigration from the Mediterranean, the Balkans, and the Polish

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ghettos. Furthermore, the presence of this "human flotsam" resulted in a decline in "native American" (i.e., North European) birthrates because

> the poorer classes of colonial stock will not bring children into the world to compete . . . with the Slovak, the Italian, the Syrian, and the Jew. . . . The man of the old stock is being crowded out of many country districts just as he is . . . being . . . driven off the streets of New York City by swarms of Polish Jews. These immigrants adopt the language of the native American . . . wear his clothes . . . steal his name . . . take his women, but . . . seldom adopt his religion or understand his ideals.

As for blacks and black-white relations, Grant declares,

> The native American has always found . . . in the black men willing followers who ask only to obey and to further the ideals and wishes of the master race, without trying to inject into the body politic their own views. . . . Negroes are never socialists or labor unionists and as long as the dominant imposes its will on the subservient race . . . the Negroes will be a valuable element in the community but once raised to social equality their influence will be destructive to themselves and to the whites. If the purity of the two races is to be maintained they cannot continue to live side by side.

Grant dismisses the possible effects of education on the cultural characteristics of ethnic or "racial" groups. Such notions

> played no small part with the sentimentalists of the Civil War period and it has taken us fifty years to learn that speaking English, wearing good clothes and going to school and to church do not transform a Negro into a white man.

Nor, in what may be a logical inconsistency, may there be any amelioration of the "lower" races' inferiority by infusions of genes from the superior race.

> The result of the mixture of two races . . . gives us a race reverting to the . . . lower type. . . . The cross between a white man and a Negro is a Negro; the cross between a white man and a Hindu is a Hindu; the cross between any of the three European races and a Jew is a Jew.

Given the irremediable deterioration of humanity with which inferior protoplasm threatens civilization, Grant advocated a policy of protoplasmic protection and improvement. He "would solve the whole question in a century" through a "rigid system of selection" that would, through sterilization, prevent the "weak and unfit—in other words social failures"—from perpetuating their weaknesses. This "practical and merciful solution" would begin with the criminal, diseased, and insane but could "be applied to an ever-widening circle of social discards . . .

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perhaps ultimately to *worthless race types*" (emphasis mine). Grant recognized that such selection is difficult in a democratic society but, in *The Passing of the Great Race*, published just before the United States entered World War I, he was hardly interested in making the world safe for democracy, a form of administration that, in his view, increased "the preponderance of lower types [in office]" to the exclusion of men "qualified by birth, education and integrity."

The venomousness and vulgarity of these passages may not surprise anyone old enough to have experienced the style of American prejudice between the two world wars. What remains shocking is that Madison Grant was chairman of the New York Zoological Society, a councillor of the American Geographical Society, and a trustee of the American Museum of Natural History; in sum, he was a highly respectable member of the social and intellectual establishment. His racism may have been more blatant than that of other prominent eugenicists, but his views were more than acceptable to them. Henry Fairfield Osborn, director of the American Museum of Natural History, wrote admiring prefaces for both the first (1916) and revised editions of *The Passing of the Great Race*, and Grant served as treasurer of the Second and Third International Congress of Eugenics, of which Henry Osborn and Charles B. Davenport were the respective presidents.

Any possibility that Davenport was merely tolerant of Grant but did not share his views is dispelled by a letter he wrote to Grant after Coolidge, declaring that "America must be kept for Americans," had signed the Immigration Act of 1924 into law.

> Our ancestors drove Baptists from Massachusetts Bay into Rhode Island but we have no place to drive the Jews to. Also they burned the witches but it seems to be against the mores to burn any considerable part of our population. Meanwhile we have somewhat diminished the immigration of these people (cited by Allan Chase, *The Legacy of Malthus*, 1980).

This, keep in mind, is from a man to whom (Freeman's account implies) we should grant a stature comparable to that of Boas, the leader of the intellectual and scientific school to which Freeman's own was opposed.

Hoover and Coolidge were not the only prominent Americans influenced by eugenicists. Hiram W. Evans, Imperial Wizard of a revived Ku Klux Klan, in an address presented on Klan Day at the Texas State Fair in October 1923, told the crowd that he had undertaken a statistical, anthropological, and eugenical study of race using the works of Lothrop Stoddard (*The Rising Tide of Color*), Grant, Davenport, and Laughlin (*Eugenical Sterilization in the United States*) (Haller, 1963: 156). Nor was the influence of Grant and other eugenicists confined to the United States. Allan Chase explains that Hitler's "closest advisors were avid

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readers of Grant and Lothrop Stoddard." Grant sent copies of his *Conquest of a Continent*, published in 1933, to Mussolini, whom he and other eugenicists admired, and to Alfred Rosenberg, Hitler's scientific advisor, and the Nazis based their sterilization laws upon a model set drawn up by Harry H. Laughlin, supervisor of the Eugenics Record Office of Cold Spring Harbor, New York.

This, then, is "the intellectual and scientific school" that Freeman represents, finally, as being neither more nor less "insufficient in scientific terms" than the anthropology of Boas and his students. Freeman is mistaken. Although some reputable geneticists participated in the eugenics movement, most were soon disenchanted. Besides, it was not really "an intellectual and scientific school" at all. Led largely by amateurs (Grant, a lawyer, was not alone among prominent eugenicists in lacking biological or anthropological training) whose incompetence was exceeded only by their bigotry and their willingness to prescribe for society's ills on the basis of their own groundless certainties, it was one of the most vicious expressions of racism in American history. It was also, because of its influence, one of the most dangerous, its evils finally being fully realized in Europe rather than America.

Among the few speaking out publicly against the pseudo-scientific claims of the eugenicists during the 1920s and 1930s were Boas and his students. Boas's responses to Grant and others were, contrary to what Freeman reports, remarkably temperate, considering the nature of the eugenicists' arguments and the scandalously bad science on which those arguments stood. And, contrary to Freeman, Boas was "disposed to explore" the interaction of genetic and exogenetic processes through scientific research. His 1912 study for the Immigration Commission, *Changes in the Body Form of Immigrants*, is perhaps best known. Based upon measurements of eighteen thousand individuals, it demonstrated conclusively that quantitative aspects of body form, particularly head shape—long taken to be absolutely heritable and therefore markers of "race"—are, in fact, highly plastic. That racial classifications based upon such distinctions were shown by this study to be illusory did not deter scholars like Grant from perpetrating them. Grant's public rebuttal amounted to a single jeering sentence in *The Passing of the Great Race*, but in a private letter to Senator F. M. Simmons, he found more particular grounds for rejecting these results:

> Dr. Boas, himself a Jew, in this matter represents a large body of Jewish immigrants, who resent the suggestion that they do not belong to the white race, and this whole effort has been to show that certain physical structures [head forms], which *we scientists* know to be profoundly indicative of race, are purely superficial (cited by Chase, emphasis mine).

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VI

As Freeman either misunderstands or misrepresents the eugenics movement, so does he misunderstand or misrepresent Boas's anthropology and the anthropology that followed him. Boas was not only a cultural anthropologist and linguist but a physical anthropologist as well. That American anthropology, unlike anthropology in most of the world, embraces four sub-disciplines (cultural anthropology, physical anthropology, archaeology, and linguistics) is part of Boas's legacy. It would be extraordinarily surprising if the man who had insisted upon the integrity of a discipline that included the study of both biological and cultural processes would have either assumed or argued that they had nothing to do with each other. In fact, he did neither. What Freeman calls "The Boasian Paradigm," a doctrine "that totally excluded biological variables" to offer "the explanation of human behavior in purely cultural terms" was *never* expounded by Boas or *any* of his students. Freeman cites as evidence a statement from Boas in 1911 that culture is "not an expression of innate mental qualities" but "a result of varied external conditions acting upon general human characteristics." For Boas, "general human characteristics" were *biological* features *general* to the human species. He took mental capacities to be biological in their foundation and stated, in the first edition of *The Mind of Primitive Man*:

> Consideration of some of the mental activities of man in civilized and in primitive society has led us to the conclusion that these functions of the human mind are common to the whole of humanity. . . . We are not inclined to consider the mental organization of different races of men as differing in fundamental points. . . . The average faculty of the white race is found to the same degree in a large proportion of individuals of all other races.

Boas did remark "that some . . . races may not produce as large a proportion of great men as our own" because available data indicated some differences among races in proportions of individuals with very large cranial capacities, and he was not yet prepared to dismiss the possibility of some sort of correlation between cranial capacity and intelligence. Be this as it may, Leslie Spier, one of his students, summed up some "central elements" of Boas's legacy in a symposium marking the centennial of his birth. Spier characterized these elements as "now axiomatic."

> (1) No racial group . . . can lay . . . claim to hereditary purity. (2) Races are not stable entities . . . but show evidence of change due to domestication, environmental influences, selection and perhaps mutation. (3) The average differences in physical characteristics are small compared to the great overlapping of range

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and duplication of types among them. (4) There is no fixed relation between function and anatomy, between mind and brain, for example, such as to warrant the view that any race is incapable of participating in any culture or even in creating it. . . . (5) . . . there is no identity of race, language and culture such that physical heredity can be credited with the formulation of languages and the achievement of civilizations. (6) On the contrary, there is overwhelming evidence that these aspects of human behavior are the products of involved historical growth, though they rest on fundamental traits of mind and body, traits probably uniformly distributed among all races.

As Weiner has pointed out, "In all of Boas' writings on race he weighs and argues both sides, neither rejecting biology *per se* nor dissociating culture from biology. What he forcibly rejected is *racial determinism.*" As Boas put it, "Nobody has so far succeeded in proving racial superiority . . . the whole formulation of the problem as a struggle between different races is misleading."

Mead no more denied a relationship between biology and culture than did Boas. In Ruth Benedict's notion of configuration, to which Mead was an early subscriber, social deviance was, in fact, largely accounted for by a lack of fit between an individual's "temperament"—the biological (in part hereditary) component of his or her constitution or disposition—and the emphases of the culture. Nor did Alfred Kroeber, whom Freeman takes to be another traducer of American anthropology. In the first edition (1923) of his famous textbook *Anthropology*, Kroeber observes: "The performance of groups is the product of two sets of factors, biological and cultural, both of which are variable and not always readily separable." He, too, was willing to face the possibility that some hereditary inequalities between races might exist, but, speaking of intelligence testing during World War I, he argued that

as long as the color-line remains drawn, a differential factor of cultural advantage is included; and how strong this is there is no present means of knowing. It is possible that some of the difference between sectionally and educationally equalized groups of whites and negroes is really innate and racial. But it is also possible that most or all of it is environmental.

Kroeber judged that "most of the alleged existing evidence on race endowment is likely to be worthless" and concluded that "it is . . . difficult . . . to establish any race as . . . superior or inferior to another but relatively easy to prove that we entertain a strong prejudice in favor of our racial superiority." Kroeber did not deny an organic component in the behavior of what is, after all, an organism. Like Boas, he held that neither differences in the behavior of members of different societies nor differences in the cultures of different societies could be accounted for by genetic differences except in some slight and trivially obvious ways.

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As in Boas's case, this was a conclusion and *not* an ideologically based presupposition. Several years earlier, in his essay "The Superorganic," Kroeber had written: "That there may be a residuum in which hereditary influences have been operative it would be dogmatic to deny," but, "a complete and consistent explanation can be given, for so-called racial differences, on a basis of purely civilizational and non-organic causes." He argued that such differences are "best intelligible" when viewed in the context of history and social relations rather than when they are attributed to "obscure organic causes."

In *Margaret Mead in Samoa*, Derek Freeman refers to "The Superorganic" as an "intellectual manifesto that conceptually dissociated cultural anthropology from biology. Their solution was the propounding of a doctrine of absolute cultural determinism that totally excluded biological variables." Kroeber, in introducing "The Superorganic" in his collection *The Nature of Culture* (1952), does recognize that "the essay appears like an anti-reductionist proclamation of independence," but he explicitly disavows any such intent and states, "What the essay really protests is the blind shuttling back and forth between an equivocal 'race' and an equivocal 'civilization' [i.e., culture]."

The assertion that Kroeber was espousing a "doctrine of absolute cultural determinism," then, is falsified by any serious reading of the article. Kroeber argued, in effect, that culture, an exclusively human possession, is grounded in the possession, unique to humans, of language. Language, in turn, is grounded in a mental capacity that is an organic product of evolution by natural selection As Kroeber states in *The Nature of Culture*,

> To deny that something purely animal [i.e., biological] underlies human speech, is fatuous; but it would be equally narrow to believe that because our speech springs from an animal foundation, and originated in this foundation, it therefore is nothing but animal mentality and utterances greatly magnified. A house may be built on rock; without this base it might be impossible for it to have been erected, but no one will maintain that therefore the house is nothing but improved and glorified stone.

Although culture is erected upon an organic foundation, it itself is not genetically transmitted.

> Heredity saves for the ant all that she has from generation to generation. But heredity does not maintain and has not maintained because it cannot maintain, one particle of the civilization [culture] which is the specifically human thing.

Although individuals vary in their abilities to contribute to culture, to transmit it, or even to learn it, "the difference between the accomplish-

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ments of one group . . . and another . . . is of another order from the difference between the faculties of one person and another."

Kroeber's general conclusions are that culture, although an order of phenomena distinct from the organic and mental, stands upon or is rooted in them; that culture is not, because it cannot be, transmitted genetically; that it is, and can only be, transmitted through language and modes of communication contingent upon language; and that no differences between "racial" groups in their genetically given capacities to create, maintain, learn, or transmit culture are known. How Freeman could have so misread the positions of Boas and his students on the relations among race, culture, and biology as to represent them as forms of "absolute cultural determinism" is not easy to understand. Deliberately or not, his account misrepresents the Boasians and, inasmuch as he asserts that the imaginary sins of the ancestors afflict their descendants, it also misrepresents subsequent developments in American anthropology.

It is difficult to generalize about the orientation of contemporary American anthropology. The discipline has expanded enormously since Boas's time. The American Anthropological Association has more than eight thousand members now, and the variety of their concerns reflects the complexity of the species that constitutes their subject matter. Medical anthropology, which is directly concerned with the interaction of cultural and organic processes, is an expanding specialty nowadays, and ecological theories that take human individuals and groups to be organisms adapting to environments through cultural means are also influential. The limits of various specialties are such that many anthropologists are not directly concerned with the interaction between organic and cultural processes. Even so, it would be hard to find *any* who would subscribe to a "doctrine of absolute cultural determinism." Moreover, "a view of human evolution *in which the genetic and exogenetic are distinct but interacting parts of a single system*," as Freeman puts it in his book, has long been part of American anthropology's received wisdom. Freeman's vague concluding suggestions for "a more scientific anthropological paradigm" are as inapposite as the critique that proceeded them is obtuse.

It is safe to say that most American anthropologists, following Alfred Kroeber, and later Leslie White and others, take culture to be an order of phenomena based upon symbols in Charles Sanders Peirce's sense. (A symbol is a sign related "only by law"—that is, convention—to that which it signifies.) American anthropologists also generally agree that the symbol and culture emerged in the hominid line, through processes of natural selection, as part of the adaptive apparatus of our forebears. Although some other species may make limited use of symbols, it is

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apparently only among hominids that full language—with its capacities to predicate, to name, to generate an infinite number of utterances at once novel and comprehensible—has emerged. Language and the cultural usages contingent upon it leave no unambiguous fossil evidence, but hominid evolution from the *Australopithecinae* to the present is generally conceived as a "mutual causal," "dialectic," or "positive feedback" interaction between "genetic and exogenetic" (linguistic and cultural) components of an emerging humanity. The culmination in genetically endowed linguistic and cultural capacities was almost certainly reached with the appearance of *Homo sapiens sapiens* around forty thousand years ago, but perhaps earlier with the appearance of *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*, or even with late *Homo erectus*. Thus, the enormous elaboration of culture over the past forty thousand years has been unaccompanied by anatomical indications of commensurate changes in mental capacity. In the absence of such evidence, cultural differences prevailing among the many societies into which the species has been and is divided can be better explained by history than biology.

Language and culture must have emerged through processes of natural selection as part of the adaptive apparatus of the hominids, but their significance transcends the human species. Leslie White claimed in *The Science of Culture* that the appearance of the symbol—by which he meant language—was not simply an evolutionary novelty enhancing the survival chances of its possessors but the most revolutionary innovation in the evolutionary process itself since life first appeared. If he was exaggerating, it was not by much. The symbol may have been no more than the most far-reaching advance to appear in evolution since the advent of sex. The recombination of genetic information in each generation not only accelerates by magnitudes rates of evolutionary change over what is possible in asexual reproduction, but also lays the ground for sociability. Transmission of information through language is yet more elaborate, comprehensive, and rapid; but the significance of language is not confined to the transmission of information. With language, whole new universes (composed, in part, of meanings) evolve. Conceptions unimaginable to nonverbal creatures—Truth, Honor, Sin, Evil, the Possible, the Impossible, Heaven, God, Equality, Kinship, Race—are created out of language. The universe inhabited by humans is in part constituted by lawful evolutionary processes—galactic, tectonic, ecological, and genetic—and in part culturally constructed out of concepts imagined into being.

Such conceptions are not simply the possessions of the particular human groups in which they emerged. In the course of evolution the relationship has become, in part, inverted. The conceptions have come to possess those who have conceived them. As cultural constructions

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have continued to serve human organisms as central elements in their many modes of adaptation to the physical world, so, conversely, have humans come to serve and perpetuate the conceptions that provide them with meaning.

Natural law and conventional meaning: the lawful and the meaningful are not coextensive, and they are differently known. If the laws of nature and the states of affairs they constitute are to be known, they must be discovered. In contrast, humankind's meanings must be *constructed* and *accepted*. Discovered laws and facts may provide some of the materials out of which meanings are made, but by themselves they do not constitute meaning, nor can they do meaning's work of organizing human action. Conversely, although constructed meanings are often represented as discovered law, they do not constitute nature. The laws of nature and the states of affairs contingent upon them are the case, whether or not they are known.

The lawful emergence, in the course of evolution, of the ability to construct meaning provided humans with no exemption from natural law, but it did increase by magnitudes their capacity not only to conceive the world but to misconstrue it as well. Evolutionary advances always create new problems as they respond to older ones, and culture itself was no exception. It must have emerged as part of the adaptive apparatus of a particular species, but it has not remained unambiguously adaptive. The cost of perpetuating some of culture's conceptions—fatherland, free enterprise, the True God, socialism, racial superiority—always great, have become greater as technology has become ever more powerful and the dangers following from misconstructions of the world have grown ever more deadly.

Contrary to what Freeman has written, contemporary American anthropology does not divorce culture from biology. It is, in fact, centrally concerned with a species that must live by meanings it itself must construct, only loosely constrained by its nature from fashioning self-destructive or world-destroying follies, in a world devoid of intrinsic meaning but subject to incompletely understood causal laws.

If law and meaning have different places in the world and if they are differently known, it follows that the considerations apposite to the assessment of scientific texts—verisimilitude, inclusiveness, parsimony, elegance, productivity, and perhaps even falsifiability—are not necessarily appropriate for the judgment of texts devoted to the construction of meaning, a class into which myth falls. If myths are texts in which problematic aspects of the world are represented and in which conventions are both sanctified and naturalized, it seems reasonable to judge them by the courses of action they justify or inspire and by the nature of the societies they edify.

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But the matter is not so simple. Some texts cannot be assigned exclusively to one category or the other. As Margaret Mead knew better than any other anthropologist of her time, ethnography should make available to humanity as a whole what it *discovers* about law and meaning in individual societies so that humanity as a whole, through some of the individuals composing it (including, perhaps, ethnographers), can *construct* larger conceptions of itself and its place in nature.

Coming of Age in Samoa stands up well to the criteria against which both classes of text are to be judged. A pioneering work in culture and personality, Mead's study was sensitive and filled with insight, even if unidimensional. Not so much incorrect as thin and in need of enrichment, it did make a modest contribution to Samoan ethnography.

The "main lessons" Mead drew from her ethnography for American society, or even for humanity as a whole, have borne up better. That relations between generations under conditions of accelerating culture change would become increasingly difficult was an accurate prediction. The insistence upon human plasticity and educability upon which her didactic chapters are founded still conforms to scientific consensus about the lack of relationship between race and cultural capacity. The meanings she constructed were not then, nor are they now, in violation of discovered fact or law, as were those of the eugenicists. Her position was, and remains, better science than theirs.

And better myth. Matters might not have been so clear in the first decades of the century, but the results are in now, and from the end of the century we can see where both myths led. Looking back through the successful assimilation into American life of the south and east Europeans whose immigration so alarmed Davenport and his colleagues, through the continuing emancipation of blacks and women, through changes in the conventions of sex and through the Holocaust, one finds it is easy to choose the myth derived from Mead's vision of Samoa over the naturalization and sanctification of hatred and oppression intrinsic to the eugenicist's myth of a northern European herrenvolk.

Its work being done, Mead's Samoan revelation and her exegesis of it are fading from the American mythos. It will be replaced by other texts, of course. The world is always full of candidates for canonization, and the choice, if choice there is, for any individual or society is not between myth and no myth but among accounts contending for mythic status. We will be well served if those we choose are as humane and liberating as the text Mead gave us.

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Grace

MONICA WOOD

So many of us have already died in this house
around the holidays festooned with food
died while the table disappears
under cranberries and pumpkins

It has become palpable
over the years
this peculiar grief
these scenes of waiting
my sisters in their nightgowns waiting
a loved one in the back room waiting
the carolers in the street
raining their happiness around
our waiting

And here we are again
another death upon us
another night of waiting
another table burdened
with bright food

The last aunt signals grace
we bow our heads as one head
we fold up our hands as one hand
in unison we thank Him for this food
then silently as one voice
we pray another death

MONICA WOOD is a musician, writer, and school counselor in Portland, Maine. Her work has appeared in various literary magazines and poetry journals.

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The Importance of Philip Larkin

JOHN WAIN

AS I SIT DOWN TO WRITE THIS ESSAY primarily for American readers, it seems to me a convenient moment to put on record a certain pessimism about Philip Larkin's transatlantic reception. I don't think, to put the matter baldly, that he will ever be such a favorite with American readers of poetry as he is with English. There are two reasons for this, one deep-seated, one trivial. To get the trivial one out of the way first, Larkin is so rooted in English life, his references are so solidly linked to English places and customs and institutions—and I didn't even say British, I said English—that the American reader can easily drop into one of several pitfalls: misinterpretation plain and simple; or feeling the detail as more exotic than it actually is; or knowingness, if he happens to be well versed in English life and has seen, for instance, the cycle-crates on Coventry station or the trolleybuses carrying people down "the long straight miles" into Hull. All that can be guarded against. The deep-seated reason, however, is more difficult to counter, and I am not sure that American readers will want to counter it or even whether they should. Larkin's poetry aims at a precision, a fine adjustment, of language, an accuracy, a way of getting the words to contain exactly the meaning he wants them to contain and not a scrap more or less, which has not on the whole, in this century, been one of the ideals that American poets have set themselves.

The two literatures have of course long since moved apart. The nineteenth-century convention that English and American poets were interestingly different but clearly related ("cousins")—the assumption that poetry in English was a huge rich cake out of which one could cut individual slices called "an American poem," "an English poem"—is now held by no one; indeed, it is scarcely remembered by anyone under about fifty. The last considerable American poet to have vital links with English poetry was Robert Frost, whose first public recognition came in England, and who repaid England handsomely by instigating the poetry

✪ JOHN WAIN is editor of *Everyman's Book of English Verse* and author of *Dear Shadows* (a collection of memoirs), *Young Shoulders* (a novel), *Poems, 1949–1979*, and *Samuel Johnson: A Biography*.

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of Edward Thomas. Frost, like Hawthorne, is intensely American while having a recognizable root in a literary tradition specifically English. Of whom could one say that since? The modernists of the 1920s had their roots in an international culture and probably owed more to Europe than to England; and for their successors, Europe in general has receded and England has disappeared altogether. What possible English component can one discern in Berryman, Lowell, the San Francisco poets? And why, indeed, should there be one?

The fact remains that the great pleasure Larkin gives to English readers comes, at any rate in part, from an exquisitely poised, exquisitely honed diction, very clear and precise, so that even when it is loaded with suggestions, they are clear and precise suggestions. So, in the dark but expectant days before the spring begins, but when one can sense its approach, a thrush starts singing,

> its fresh-peeled voice
> Astonishing the brickwork.

Or, in that vision of the "very last" person who one day will visit the church,

> . . . will he be my representative,
> Bored, uninformed, knowing the ghostly silt
> Dispersed . . .

Ghostly silt! It is a phrase one can ponder again and again, as one ponders certain phrases in Shakespeare, and always with an accretion of diamond-clear meaning.

American poetry has not, in this century, aimed much at this kind of effect. Its virtues have been elsewhere and of other kinds—energy, variety, a sense of reaching out, of confronting life across a wide field. The contained quality of Larkin's language—not a prim or spinsterly containment but an intensely masculine, strength-giving one—is a tradition he inherits from classical English poetry. That tradition is still firmly alive in its own country, but I doubt if it has ever traveled well.

Having touched that theme thus briefly, I will drop it. This essay is not a foot-in-the-door job, trying to sell Larkin to an American readership. The most useful thing I can do is to state simply what seem to me to be the reasons for his high reputation in this, his own, country, and even here my emphasis will be on what *I* see in him, what his work does for *me*, rather than an effort to see him through the eyes of other people. But first, a general statement of something that is in the public domain—Larkin's historical importance, the effect his work has had on the way poetry is written and read and thought of.

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I

In general, I accept the view that a major artist is one who alters or modifies the tradition of his art. A minor artist may be exquisite, and give great pleasure, and be remembered with much honor and gratitude, without affecting the way his art is practiced or thought of. An example from music would, I suppose, be Mendelssohn: certainly an excellent composer whose work holds its place in the repertory, but not a composer who left music different from how he found it; if there were changes in the European musical tradition during his lifetime, they were not changes brought about by him. Examples from English poetry might be Herrick and Marvell or Robert Graves. Exquisite work—deathless, some of it—but no discernible effect on the tradition, therefore, in that sense, "minor." By this yardstick Larkin is a major poet, within the reach of English literary tradition. He has affected the way poetry is written and read. Single-handedly, or almost single-handedly, he achieved a large-scale historical feat. He gave English poetry back to the common reader after half a century in which that reader had been kept away from it with barbed wire and tracker dogs. And he did it with absolutely no lowering of standards, no dilution.

It is necessary to take a step backwards to put this in its historical perspective. In the years round about 1850, poetry was an extremely popular art in England, and indeed throughout the English-speaking countries. In the years round about 1950 it was extremely unpopular. Obviously something had happened, and as usual the something was not one thing but a combination of things.

There is no need to rehearse it all in detail, especially to readers whose basic education can be taken for granted. I have in mind such matters as the shattering effect of the First World War, which wrenched apart the framework of the traditional European culture; and the tremendous personal charisma of two young American poets who settled in England in the years just before that war. Both Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot poured scorn on the previously accepted procedures of English poetry, those which twentieth-century poets had carried on from nineteenth-century poets. Eliot expressed this scorn in a very refined, mandarin way; Pound much more directly. Both fitted in well with the prevailing view taken in the years from about 1916 onward, which was that if the traditional culture couldn't civilize us enough to prevent maniacal slaughter on this scale, it didn't deserve to survive—a point that Pound made overtly in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley:*

> There died a myriad,
> And of the best, among them,

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For an old bitch gone in the teeth,
For a botched civilization.

The time was ripe for new experiments and new methods anyway, but I think the reasons why the new movement took the precise form it did, especially in England, really had something to do with the personal tastes and opinions of Pound and Eliot. Neither was a democrat. Neither had any trust in the good taste or judgment of the common reader. Both tended to accept, quite unquestioned, the view that the arts, and civilization generally, proceed by means of a series of advances made by a tiny *élite* of very cultivated people, who pass on the new sensibility to the general public—or don't, as the case may be. To Pound, artists were "the antennae of the race," and he quite explicitly set them in contrast to "the bullet-headed many." And Eliot's point of view was the same, though he always expressed it more guardedly.

In 1921 Eliot published his famous essay "The Metaphysical Poets," in which, having discussed the characteristic blend of thought and emotion that these poets achieved ("A thought to Donne was an experience; it modified his sensibility"), he went on to issue what came to be widely regarded, and widely obeyed, as a ukase, though to do him justice he probably didn't see it as such; he was not yet the acclaimed poet of *The Waste Land,* not yet a lawgiver.

Eliot wrote:

> It is not a permanent necessity that poets should be interested in philosophy, or in any other subject. We can only say that it appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be *difficult*. Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning.

Even now, with the inevitable disappointments of sixty-five years piled up against it, there is something attractive and stimulating about that point of view. Falling on the ears of a generation that had been brought up largely on the simplicities of Newbolt and Kipling, it sounded like a clarion call. But of course, considered coolly, it won't do. There is no space here to go into all the myriad reasons why it won't do—and here and there, goodness knows, one comes across a survivor of that generation still stoutly maintaining that it does very well. But on the whole it can be seen, now, as nothing more valid than a justification of the Pound-Eliot "line." The notion that because modern life is complex and difficult to grasp and therefore the poetry that interprets that life must itself be complex and difficult to grasp now seems like the kind of non sequitur that underlies most of the grandly sweeping generaliza-

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tions one hears about the arts. But—and this is where we circle back to Philip Larkin—I doubt if we should have escaped even yet from the stifling effects of this ukase if it had not been for the liberating effect of Larkin's work over twenty-odd years.

Fashionable opinion in the twenties, thirties, and forties tended to assume, unquestioningly, that complex art was better than simple art, a position that would not hold good anyway, but was made even more untenable by the further superficial assumption that "complexity" and "simplicity" were affairs of the surface. Thus a poet like E. E. Cummings, who deliberately complicated the surface of his work, passed current as a "modern" poet, though his content was actually simple to the point of naïveté. Push this attitude a little further into absurdity and you get people assuming that *Finnegans Wake* is complex, whereas *War and Peace*, being perfectly intelligible from one sentence to the next, is simple. Therefore if it is not "modern," it is of no use as a model to young writers who want to be in the swim.

W. B. Yeats, a greater poet than either Pound or Eliot, was struck in mid-career by the change in taste, the demand that the poet shall be "comprehensive, allusive, indirect," that he shall "dislocate" language; and, with what has often seemed to me a certain sardonic relish, he set about writing a poetry that should have all these qualities and still keep the imaginative intensity that marked him out as the finest poet of the century. But Yeats never ceased to produce poems in an entirely different vein, poems that had no arcane system of symbolism, no private vocabulary, no buried hints for Sunday-afternoon puzzle-solvers to pick up. He never had any difficulty in expressing direct feeling in direct language:

> It may be all they say is true
> Of war and war's alarms;
> But O that I were young again
> And held her in my arms!

Larkin, as he has told us in the preface to the reprint of *The North Ship*, began his poetic life as an admirer, and to some extent an imitator, of Yeats. And the Yeats who affected him so deeply was not the arcane symbolizing Yeats but the lyrical, direct Yeats. (There isn't space for detailed illustration, but to anyone who is capable of seeing what is in front of him, there is no need for illustration; I simply adduce the poems as evidence.) Later, as the flamboyance of Yeats came to seem more alien to his own quiet and rather badger-like character, it was Hardy who became the major affinity. From the earlier fifties on, Larkin's voice is very much his own, but there is a constant thread of poems like "Love Songs in Age" which are Hardyesque as well as Larkinesque.

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One thing that Yeats and Hardy had in common was that neither of them had the Pound-Eliot disdain for the ordinary reader. Yeats may have had moods in which he said

> He has enough of rhyming who can please
> A young girl in the indolence of her youth
> Or an old man upon a winter's night

and other moods when he wanted to speak for his nation—for every man, woman, and child in it. But at least he never wanted to address merely an international smart set. And Hardy, great artist as he was, remained rooted among the people; the son of a fiddler who played at village weddings, to the end he associated poetry with dancing and singing.

Part of the underpinning of the Pound-Eliot case, and of the modernist line in general, was a fear of democracy on cultural grounds; a feeling, not of course without foundation, that mass education and mass literacy were producing an audience with lower standards, so that the higher reaches of literature—poetry, the serious novel, drama—had to be made puzzling to keep the rabble out. In the forties the chief opponent of this view was John Betjeman. I remember going to a talk Betjeman gave to an Oxford society in about 1945 in which he fiercely denounced modern poetry of the Eliot school as "an imposture on the public." And in his own poetry Betjeman clung to traditional forms and wrote about the ordinary day-to-day concerns of middle-class life (couples getting engaged during long heart-to-heart talks in parked cars, etc.). The public showed its gratitude by making a best-seller of Betjeman, and in my opinion they did right; but to a more austere taste there was often a hint of the facetious, a touch of the trite, in some of the poems; it was always possible for the modernists to point to Betjeman's weaker poems as an Awful Warning of what happened if you wrote poetry for the ordinary man and woman; I don't say it was justifiable, but it was possible, and they did it.

Larkin, who admired Betjeman while being perfectly clear-sighted about him, wrote of the same quotidian subject matter but with absolutely perfect touch and tone. If anyone had said in about 1940, "What England needs is a poet as intelligible as Betjeman, and as sympathetic to the ordinary person, but with never a trace of anything second-rate and with an imaginative intensity to remind one of Yeats," it would have seemed like mere daydreaming. That such a poet should arise would have seemed the most impossible thing in the world. But it happened, and it happened because Philip Larkin had the skill and the sensibility to make it happen, and the courage to start from a very lonely position in defiance of modish literary opinion, and to keep quietly working away until the authority of his poetry was felt and the critics had to come

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round and his position wasn't lonely anymore, and then it became the fashionable thing to say about him that he was "overpraised." Overpraised be damned.

II

So much for the overview, the objective account of broad impersonal matters. What I have written so far I expect would meet with general agreement, even from people who don't care for Larkin's poetry, or care for it much less than I do. Can we, now, move in closer to his work, examine its grain and texture, get some intimate sense of how it breathes and moves and involves with life?

In addition to the firmness of his roots in English social tradition and English linguistic usage, there is another cause of interpretative difficulty in Larkin's poetry, one before which we all start equal, and that is his occasional resort to pure image as a means of making a statement about some psychic, spiritual, or philosophical reality that has not proved penetrable by the language of discourse or comparison. His range does in fact include the occasional—and all the more effective because sparing—use of what we can only call "pure poetry," a form of statement that, without being anything so heavy as "symbolic," does not allow us to unpack it into any other form of words.

The most celebrated example of this tendency in Larkin, often discussed (by myself, among others) is in "Days," from *The Whitsun Weddings*. It is equally clear in the last stanza of "Money," a poem that begins in quite a different tone—Larkin in his down-to-earth, slangy, no-nonsense vein. Every time he gets a salary check, the money reproaches him for not doing more with it.

> So I look at others, what they do with theirs:
> They certainly don't keep it upstairs.
> By now they've a second house and car and wife:
> Clearly money has something to do with life
>
> —In fact, they've a lot in common, if you enquire:
> You can't put off being young until you retire,

And so on. But the final stanza uses nothing but a montage of images: nothing, that is, until the sudden impact of the last four words.

> I listen to money singing. It's like looking down
> From long french windows at a provincial town,
> The slums, the canal, the churches ornate and mad
> In the evening sun. It is intensely sad.

To me, one of the most striking examples of the poet's use of

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irreducible imagery, the imaginative leap that takes us straight to the reality without resorting to discourse, is the image of the sand-clouds in "Dockery and Son"—a poem, incidentally, that exemplifies many of Larkin's procedures, from the comic-realistic opening to the uncompromising candor, the totally unadorned statement of unpalatable truth, of the last four lines.

> Where do these
> Innate assumptions come from? Not from what
> We think truest, or most want to do:
> Those warp tight-shut, like doors. They're more a style
> Our lives bring with them: habit for a while,
> Suddenly they harden into all we've got
>
> And how we got it; looked back on, they rear
> Like sand-clouds, thick and close, embodying
> For Dockery a son, for me nothing,
> Nothing with all a son's harsh patronage.

I wonder how the image of sand-clouds (a sight very rarely met with in the British Isles) came to Larkin's mind. But it is altogether effective, the image of something as uncontrollable as an ordinary atmospheric cloud but more solid, more threatening (to be caught in a sand-cloud can't possibly do you any good), and apt to pursue people who journey across deserts. It moves us to a point where we are ready for the thudding statement of those last few lines, perhaps the bleakest in all English poetry. In the last thirty years we have witnessed the vogue of the extreme statement, and in particular the statement of despair and nihilism; playwrights have shown their characters in grotesque attitudes of despair and humiliation, as when Beckett buries his people up to the neck in sand or puts them in dustbins; Edward Bond has given us a *Lear* that seeks to be as bloody and savage as Shakespeare's while jettisoning its message of love and hope; a sickening poem like Ted Hughes's *Crow* was welcomed by the literary establishment as showing the way forward that English poetry must take if it meant to survive. Personally I find such antics either merely stomach turning, or boring, or—as often as not—rather engagingly comical; an evening of Beckett's surrealism sends me away feeling that I have been watching the Marx Brothers. But I recognize that it is not a writer's duty to dispense cheer-up mixture; anyone who sees human life whole will see the tragedy at its center; anyone who tries to tell the truth will find himself, often, telling very disconcerting truths as well as, sometimes, heartening ones. And the most bleak and inescapable statement of the numbing side of human destiny that I know of in recent literature is not to be found in the hysterical attitude-striking of the extremists, but in the quiet,

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deadly force of the last four lines of Larkin's "Dockery and Son":

> Life is first boredom, then fear.
> Whether or not we use it, it goes,
> And leaves what something hidden from us chose,
> And age, and then the only end of age.

III

I think if I were picking one characteristic that unites all of Larkin's diverse output, I would call it *consciousness*. There is an intelligence, a receptivity, a sensibility at work that reminds me of Pope's

> The spider's touch, so exquisitely fine,
> Feels in each thread, and lives along the line.

In proof of which, let any of the books fall open virtually anywhere. The poet's awareness reaches out to all aspects of his subject. Take the triad of poems from *High Windows* that Larkin called *Livings*. They form a unity in the same way that a triptych does, each panel supporting the others and contributing to the whole. Each gives a compressed, lucid portrayal of a certain way of making a living. A reasonably attentive reading will soon establish that all the poems are "historical," even without the specific date of 1929 in the first one, and that they are not from the same period; the luxury liner in the second one is obviously a thirties job, one of those mad floating palaces in which the rich and important crossed the Atlantic before the airlines destroyed them (the palaces, not the rich and important). In the third poem, the dons, whose talk over their port is such a blend of the wide-ranging and the parochial, are obviously eighteenth century and obviously Cambridge (the rank of Sizar, a student who paid some of his expenses by doing domestic chores like waiting at table, was not known by that name at Oxford, and Snape is a real place in East Anglia, not far from Aldeburgh and quite handy for Cambridge). The poem is like an engraved illustration to a rich, quirky eighteenth-century novel ("Our butler Starveling," etc.). There is much one might say about all these three poems or panels of the one poem, but since we must select, let us take the second.

> Seventy feet down
> The sea explodes upwards,
> Relapsing, to slaver
> Off landing-stage steps—
> Running suds, rejoice!
>
> Rocks writhe back to sight.
> Mussels, limpets,

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Husband their tenacity
In the freezing slither—
Creatures, I cherish you!

By day, sky builds
Grape-dark over the salt
Unsown stirring fields.
Radio rubs its legs,
Telling me of elsewhere:

Barometers falling,
Ports wind-shuttered,
Fleets pent like hounds,
Fires in humped inns
Kippering sea-pictures—

Keep it all off!
By night, snow swerves
(O loose moth world)
Through the stare travelling
Leather-black waters.

Guarded by brilliance
I set plate and spoon,
And after, divining-cards.
Lit shelved liners
Grope like mad worlds westward.

As I noted earlier, Larkin came to his wide acceptance via a period in which his poetry met with a fair amount of disparagement, and if I remember rightly, the kind of thing that was urged against him in the fifties and sixties, by people committed to opposite values and opposite practices in poetry, was that it was unadventurous and predictable; he described these critics himself, in a televised conversation with John Betjeman, as "the people who say I write a kind of Welfare State sub-poetry." What these critics would say about "Livings, II" I have no idea; to me, it seems a poem altogether unpredictable and with some elements of the purely surprising. Take the personality through whom we focus on the scene, the "I" of the poem. Obviously, he is a steward on one of those magnificently appointed transatlantic liners; he belongs to that enclosed, temporary world of total regularity, total punctuality, total comfort that those ships represented. (I crossed the Atlantic myself on one of the finest of them, the *Queen Mary*, a year or two before she was retired, and I can testify that they really were like that.) The steward belongs to this world of devoted and successful contrivance, and also ministers to it, helps to bring it about, and therefore is part of it; Wallace Stevens has a poem, "Farewell to Florida," which begins

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> Go on, high ship, since now, upon the shore,
> The snake has left its skin upon the floor.
> Key West sank downward under massive clouds
> And silvers and greens spread over the sea . . .

but the "I" of this poem is obviously a passenger: Larkin's making his "I" a crew member is a device that allows much greater richness, especially a crew member on the domestic side, looking after the comfort of the landlubber passengers, making the ship as little ship-like as possible, since the aim is to make it as stable, comfortable, and well provided as a luxury hotel on land, with the added magical ingredient that at the end of five days it will arrive in New York. The steward's attitude is part of the surprisingness of the poem; one might expect him to be hostile or at best indifferent to the natural setting through which the ship moves; the trackless sea, the strange alien forms of life, the potentialities for disaster latent in vast distances and unimaginable depths, the untamed elemental forces of wind and water. Far from it: he looks down from the railing and delights in the abandon of the unconfined water ("Running suds, rejoice!") and feels love for the anchored limpets and mussels that "husband their tenacity / In the freezing slither," so that his cry of "Creatures, I cherish you!" conveys a sense of identification and acceptance that, in its purposely more muted way, recalls one of the supreme moments of English Romantic poetry, the blessing of the water snakes in Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner;* this man, at any rate, will never deserve to have the murdered body of an albatross hung round his neck.

At the same time, he is mindful of his duties and performs them without mockery; guarded by brilliance, he sets plate and spoon, and after dinner he lays out divining-cards. Not playing cards, we notice; a real steward would be called on for both, but what the poet chooses to highlight is that the cosseted passengers, in their lavishly lit and warmed saloon, pass the time by telling fortunes and trying to predict the future; and this is appropriate, for, however heavily disguised, what they are actually doing is taking their chances on a dangerous element never totally amenable to human technology. And the ship, after all, is "mad," for all its gleaming precision engineering; ships like this "grope" their way westward, a very good word for the tactile way in which a ship churns through the ocean, but it also suggests the way a blind man moves, by guesswork. We are not, in truth, fooled by all this pretense of being a luxury hotel in perfect safety on the well-ordered promenade. The *Titanic,* after all, was not very effectively "guarded by brilliance."

Once we have accepted this and look out, through the eyes of the

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steward figure, at the sea-going world the poet shows us, we see at once that no poem we have ever read has been more highly charged verbally. The sheer virtuosity, the impressionistic brilliance in the conveying of detail, is "at every point twice done, and then done double." And now we understand why it is placed as the midmost panel of three in a triptych whose other two poems are written much more soberly, each in its different vein, the first reflective and slightly melancholy, the third comic and picturesque. This middle poem swings totally clear of either convention. It is the pure, distilled poetic language. Some poetry gets particular strength from its nouns, some from its verbs; in a poet like Auden, the distinctive flavor, the small poetic shock, often comes in an adjective ("the mild and vegetarian beasts"); here, in these few short lines, all three are strong; the winter sky "builds," the rocks "writhe back to sight," the radio "rubs its legs" (i.e., in making the grasshopper-chirp of Morse code and using its antennae). In the years just before the big passenger liners were withdrawn, they ceased to make the crossing in winter; I sailed on the *Queen Mary* in mid-March and it was her first run of the year; but this poem is obviously based in the great days of the Blue Riband liners when they sailed every week all the year round, for this is a midwinter voyage; the sky is "grape-dark," and everything is shut down for the season both in the enclosed world of the ship and "elsewhere." The bridging passage here is "Ports wind-shuttered," since the word *port* is used both of a coastal town with a deep-water harbor and of the porthole of a ship, screwed tight and salt-caked at this time of year. The "I," of all his accepting attitude towards surrounding nature, is driven into a defensive survival routine, as every creature is in winter: "Keep it all off!"

It is like a cry, or an inarticulate prayer, wrung from him by the immensity and terrifyingness of the vast world beyond the trim and calculated confines of the ship, a world that follows its own laws and only its own, that would engulf and destroy the tightly planned little floating city and not even know it was doing so; the three lines that follow that cry are perhaps the most brilliant of the poem. The "leather-black" sea! The "swerve" of falling snow! The watcher is fascinated by the indiscipline of the snowflakes, contrasting with the planned, measured shipboard world. Lepidoptera survive because their very inability to fly in a straight line makes it difficult for birds to catch them; snowflakes fly in just such a zigzag pattern, and the comparison invokes moths rather than butterflies because moths are nocturnal and the snowflakes are swerving through darkness. I hope Jake Balokowsky, in his monograph on Larkin, doesn't pull out too many stops on "stare travelling," a phrase that has something of the complexity that invites

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ingenious interpretation, God forbid. The steward, in some brief interlude of his duties, is gazing out at the night seascape; he is staring, and since what is around him is featureless, it contains nothing to pinpoint or anchor his wandering vision; his stare travels over the waters with an aimlessness that is the exact opposite of the ship's planned and projected course. But *stare* is an old word for a starling, one that survived longer in Ireland than anywhere else and lives in poetry mainly through Yeats's beautiful refrain

> O honey-bees,
> Come build in the empty house of the stare.

He had the ornithology right, by the way; starlings tend to nest in holes, and bees would find it natural to use a starling's abandoned house to swarm in. The dark, frightening sea out there not only offers nothing for the observer's stare to hold on to, but it is also the terrible trackless waste across which migrating birds have to find their way. Starlings migrate long distances, and though their usual route is north to south and back, they are fairly frequently reported as having crossed the Atlantic, not in a single straight line but by island-hopping.*

Another facet of this poet's consciousness is the unstressed but continually present historicity. Philip Larkin was an agnostic who did not believe in eternity, as religious people conceive of it, any more than he believed in "a common myth-kitty" that can be invoked to give a dimension of timelessness. As he saw it, things happen to us in sequence; we are time-bound; human affairs, whether collective or individual, cannot transcend history. So that the individual human life is measured by history both within and without—by its own history and by the enveloping history of the society.

> I wonder if
> Anyone looked at me, forty years back,
>
> And thought, *That'll be the life;*
> *No God any more, or sweating in the dark*

* Since completing this essay, I have been visited by the thought that other interpretations of "Livings, II" are possible and more than possible. It is possible that the speaker is not necessarily male, not necessarily on a ship, and therefore not necessarily working as a steward. Peter Levi has suggested to me that the speaker might be an old Irishwoman working as a fortune-teller, looking out at the Atlantic, and down at the landing-stage steps, from the top of a cliff. (And I do admit that even those gigantic liners were hardly "seventy feet" at the prow.) Readers will just have to keep an open mind. This is Larkin's most opaque poem; if I had realized how difficult it was before his death last September, I would have asked the poet for guidance; but now, "he has the receipt of fern-seed, he walks invisible."

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About hell and that, or having to hide
What you think of the priest . . .

Religious belief, he is saying, ceased to be a preponderate element in Western civilization, not merely in the arena of intellectual discussion but in the texture of ordinary people's lives, at or just before the time when his own life began (1922), and this is immediately translated into concrete terms, the specific thoughts of an older person, too rooted to make the change, looking at him as a child—as he himself now looks at "a couple of kids" who are acting out the pattern of sexual liberation that came in with the social changes of the sixties, for

Sexual intercourse began
In nineteen sixty-three,
Between the ending of the Chatterley ban
And the Beatles' first LP,
Though rather late for me.

Accordingly, in "Church Going" (I suppose the pun in the title has been noticed?), he pinpoints a future historical event that will not, when it happens, be perceived as a historical event; it will pass unnoticed; but it will be a clear, precise, all-deciding moment of demarcation nevertheless:

I wonder who
Will be the last, the very last, to seek
This place for what it was?

IV

I mentioned Jake Balokowsky a little while ago; he is of course one of Larkin's symbols of historicity, like the "very last" person who will visit the church knowing that it was one. When in the mid-1970s I gave a lecture on Larkin's poetry to the University of Oxford as part of my duties as Professor of Poetry, I had already noticed that the poem "Posterity" had in some quarters been misinterpreted as a piece of condescension, and I went out of my way to tread on this mistake. Jake Balokowsky, I pointed out, is not at all an unsympathetic character; "he has some ideals for which he is prepared to work and perhaps even suffer ('I wanted to teach school in Tel-Aviv')." Unfortunately when this lecture got into print (in *Professing Poetry,* 1977) and this passage duly appeared in print on page 168, there was an irritating misprint; it comes out as "some ideal" instead of "some ideals," the inference apparently being that he has some kind of an ideal, though I can't imagine what;

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patronizing again! All I was trying to say, and Larkin was clearly saying the same, was that Balokowsky is a perfectly decent man who happens to come from a culture totally removed in time and space from the poet's own. The only stroke of overt satire in the poem is the title, for *posterity* is a word often used to settle arguments, a Big Brother against whom there is no appeal, and who will protect some of us and order others to be vaporized.

Satire, in fact, isn't very frequent in Larkin, though certain attitudes he disliked are embodied in target figures like the horrible little creature in "Naturally the Foundation Will Bear All Your Expenses" or the faceless politicians in "Homage to a Government." Mostly what he expresses is compassion, though it is the compassion of a witty and clear-sighted man and therefore all the more worth having.

But indeed, once we cease to concentrate on the literary and technical aspects of Larkin's work and move to a broad delineation of its content, it is time for the critic to rest his case. The human content of Larkin's work doesn't need me to point it out. It doesn't need anybody. It is there, exposed in the intense dry light of his superb technique; and the reason for talking about his technique at all is because it was his means of producing that light, of making what he wanted to say so vividly clear and memorable. He wrote to *say* things, not to establish to everyone's admiration that the "variety and complexity" of modern society had "played upon a refined sensibility." His work flies straight in the face of the foolish modern notion, fostered by the most irresponsible elements in our universities, that the best book is the one that needs the most explanation. Who needs a spelling-out of what Larkin is saying? Who can miss the compassion that makes him say of the down-and-outs in the park "Think of being them"; the pity for loneliness and failure, as in "Love Songs in Age" or more wryly in "Mr. Bleaney"; the intense joy in natural life and the beauty of the earth, as in "Coming" or "Spring"; the gentle nostalgia, as in "Dublinesque"; the dry satiric wit, or the outright broad comedy that can suddenly turn serious—who can even glance through Larkin's work and not see these? Some will, of course, but that is for a social, not a literary reason; in our age, huge numbers of people are subjected more or less forcibly to some sort of ducking in the literary culture as part of their "education"; they puzzle over a page of verse not because they are naturally drawn to do so but because they are part of what Larkin himself called "the dutiful mob that signs on every September." To me, these victims are men and brothers, and women and sisters, and I do not exclude them from the human race; but there comes an end of trying to put poetry through this meat grinder. One tries once, one tries twice, but in the end one will never make it work with

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everyone, and why should it? Fats Waller, when he was asked the question, "Mr. Waller, what is rhythm?" replied simply, "Lady, if ya has to *ask*, ya ain't got it." Larkin admired Fats Waller and enjoyed his music for fifty years, so who better to have the last word?

A Scientist Aboard the Titanic *Says Good-bye to His Wife in His Head*

STEVE KRONEN

Whatever goes up must come down; this is
a given. But what goes down does not nec-
essarily rise—never measure bless-
ings by expectation or aphorism.
A blessing much more resembles a gas,
is buoyant, is lighter than air, insists
on elevating both itself and its
subject past the common, much as a kiss
is able to do between wife and hus-
band or father and daughter. Osmosis,
however, is when a fluid—in this
case water—moves through a semiporous
membrane, such as the lungs, so that the pres-
sure is equalized. See how the ship lists
to one side like a man asleep in his
bed? All bodies seek a natural, rest-
ing place; this is called homeostasis.
I had always thought mine land. I was mis-
taken.

How strange this moon, white and quartered,
sets nothing on shore but light and water.

STEVE KRONEN's poems have appeared in the *Southern Poetry Review*, the *American Poetry Review*, the *Palmetto Review*, and other journals.

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?

ELDER OLSON

I know what it is, till you ask me.
—St. Augustine

Time brings all to be,
Brings all to an end;
Turns the sea to land
And the land to sea,
Indifferent to all;

In its indifference
Prolongs the ephemeral,
Fish- and fern-shape pressed
Into less-transient stone;
Leaves one
Thigh bone to attest
Where the great city fell;

Immeasurable; measured still
By the spinning worlds,
Slow-swirling galaxies,
By, as well,
Bell, wind-chime,
Melting icicle,

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Time
Pays no heed to these;
Questioned, makes no reply

Except to demonstrate
Again and yet again
No armor can defend
Against the inner worm,
Ivy and weed invade
Walls that warriors could not storm,
The shrine
Outlasts the faith, the gods
Die with their devotees;

Except once more to rehearse
—Though that, too, has its term—
The inexplicable charade:
Spring, in pale fripperies,
Summer, flushed, full-blown,
Autumn in motley like a clown,
Winter, sifting down
Snow silent as the stars.

✪ ELDER OLSON is Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Chicago. His latest books are *On Value Judgments in the Arts and Other Essays* and *Last Poems*. "?" is the winner of the fifth Mary Elinore Smith Poetry Prize. The $200 prize is given in memory of Miss Smith by her family and friends. Mary Elinore Smith, who died in 1981, was an editor of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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"You Have the Right to Remain Silent"

Miranda After Twenty Years

PATRICK A. MALONE

MIRANDA V. ARIZONA is the only ruling of the United States Supreme Court to add a new verb to the language—to *mirandize* the suspect. When issued twenty years ago, it quickly became—and remains to this day—the most reviled decision ever issued by the Supreme Court in a criminal case. Congressmen called for Chief Justice Earl Warren's impeachment. Constitutional amendments were introduced. Police chiefs predicted chaos. Richard Nixon won the presidency in part by holding up *Miranda* as Exhibit One in the indictment against the excesses of the Warren Court for "coddling criminals" and "handcuffing the police."

All this controversy was over a decision that required police departments to do what many law enforcement agencies already practiced: inform a suspect before interrogation of his right not to talk to police and his right to a lawyer—appointed at no cost if he could not afford one—and warn him that, if he did talk, what he said could be used as evidence against him.

Everyone assumed that, once warned of these rights, few suspects would agree to talk to police without a lawyer. The Warren Court's many detractors feared this would paralyze criminal investigations, which relied heavily on obtaining confessions. The Court's few supporters hoped the *Miranda* warnings would reduce the widespread use of trickery and psychologically coercive tactics during police interrogation of suspects. This seemed clearly to be the goal of the majority opinion written by Chief Justice Warren, one that catalogued in damning detail the deceptive practices advocated by leading police procedure manuals and practiced across the country.

Miranda has met neither side's expectations. The creation of a suspect's right to be told his rights has not appreciably affected the confession rate. Nor has *Miranda* curbed the use by police interrogators

PATRICK A. MALONE is a trial lawyer and writer in Washington, D.C.

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of such tactics as showing the suspect fake evidence, putting the suspect to a phony lie detector test that he is guaranteed to flunk, and making fraudulent offers of sympathy and help.

Miranda never was as radical as critics have painted it. The Court in *Miranda* did not ban outright, as it could have, all use of questionable interrogation tactics. Nor did the high court require, as courts in other countries have, that any questioning of a suspect be conducted before a neutral magistrate. Instead, the court formulated what amounted to a warning label as an effort to accommodate ideals of fair play to the perceived necessities of police work.

Attorney General Edwin Meese recently called *Miranda* "a wrong decision," "an infamous decision." But none of the major police and prosecutor lobbying groups, such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police or the National District Attorneys Association, has joined in Meese's call to overrule *Miranda*.

That is because, on closer examination, *Miranda* turns out to be the police officer's friend. The *Miranda* warning has become, in the main, a benediction at the outset of every interrogation, sanctifying the very practices it was meant to end. Studies—in New Haven, Connecticut; Washington, D.C.; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Denver, Colorado; and elsewhere—have found that *Miranda* warnings have little or no effect on a suspect's propensity to talk. Most suspects routinely waive their *Miranda* rights and submit to police questioning. Next to the warning label on cigarette packs, *Miranda* is the most widely ignored piece of official advice in our society. Even when *Miranda* is violated, it is rare that a confession will be ruled inadmissible or that a suspect will go free. Ernest Miranda himself was retried and reconvicted. A recent federally funded study in Illinois, Michigan, and Pennsylvania found that convictions were lost as a result of judges throwing out confessions in only five out of the 7,035 cases studied, or 0.07 percent.

Most people not closely related to a criminal defendant or a criminal defense lawyer will applaud this news, at least at first blush. The rights of defendants, most of whom richly deserve a spell behind bars, have never been a popular cause, and police tactics have never excited much public curiosity. As the constitutional law scholar Yale Kamisar once observed, the typical police suspect and his interrogator are generally viewed "as garbage and garbage collector, respectively."

But the debate, then and now, is not simply over ritual niceties in police questioning of criminal suspects. It is a debate over what kind of criminal justice system we will have.

The United States Constitution states that an accused shall not "be compelled to be a witness against himself" and shall enjoy the rights to "due process of law" and "assistance of counsel." In a 1949 Supreme

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Court decision, Justice Felix Frankfurter capsulized the criminal justice system envisioned by the Constitution when he wrote:

> Ours is the accusatorial as opposed to the inquisitorial system. Such has been the characteristic of Anglo-American criminal justice since it freed itself from practices borrowed by the Star Chamber from the Continent whereby an accused was interrogated in secret for hours on end. Under our system society carries the burden of proving its charge against the accused not out of his own mouth. It must establish its case, not by interrogation of the accused even under judicial safeguards, but by evidence independently secured through skillful investigation.

The American criminal justice system has in fact been far closer to the inquisitorial than Justice Frankfurter's ringing words would suggest. The reason for this is because we have not one system of criminal justice but two: one is conducted in the courthouse, in the open, with phalanxes of lawyers and judges protecting the defendant's rights; the other is conducted in the police station, in private, with no one standing between the accused and the accusers.

Police interrogation, which is perhaps the most striking instance of this bifurcated system, presents two fundamental issues: Does it work? Is it fair? The answer to both questions is vigorously disputed.

It is beyond doubt that the time-honed and sophisticated methods taught by interrogation manuals and police academies are extremely effective in getting suspects to reveal incriminating information—a fact appreciated by few suspects when they sign *Miranda* waiver cards. What is far more uncertain is the frequency with which those statements by suspects are true or false or somewhere in between.

Cases of convincing but false confessions are by their nature difficult to ferret out. Yet they are regularly documented. An eighteen-year-old named Peter Reilly confessed to killing his mother in Canaan, Connecticut. Another young man in Great Britain confessed to raping an eleven-year-old girl. In both cases, the confession seemed credible because it contained facts known only to the police and the real perpetrator. Reilly was freed only after an intense two-year campaign by friends and neighbors that enlisted the sympathy of the playwright Arthur Miller and other celebrities. The British youth was exonerated when it was shown that his blood type differed from that of the attacker. In neither case was the defendant mentally disturbed or otherwise abnormal. Yet the police, using only standard interrogation techniques without any physical threats or violence, persuaded both young men to confess that they were guilty of crimes someone else had committed.

Studies of Americans repatriated from Chinese prisoner of war camps during the Korean War found that the vast majority of prisoners had

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falsely confessed to crimes or engaged in related conduct, such as writing propaganda for the enemy. The psychologist Albert Biderman found that, of more than two hundred former prisoners whom he examined, not a single one had obeyed the injunction to divulge only his name, rank, and serial number.

The full-blown, fantastic confession is only the tip of the problem. Far more common is the confession that is false only in particular details—but twisted enough to turn excusable behavior into a crime or to convict a defendant of a crime far more serious than the one he in fact committed. In a recent Wisconsin case, Gerald Larson confessed to killing a friend after the friend had assaulted him with a metal pipe. In a statement to police, Larson said his friend had turned away when he shot him, but on the witness stand, Larson repudiated his confession and said the friend was coming at him when he fired. The pathologist's findings supported either version. The jury chose to believe the initial confession, understandably but perhaps mistakenly discounting the possibility that out of shock, confusion, or suggestion (Larson said he was drunk when questioned), Larson's initial statement was wrong. As with the hundreds of other confessions that are recanted every year, the truth or falsity of Larson's confession will never be known.

Then there is the even more common variant of the false confession—the alibi statement, later proven to be a lie, which damns the defendant because of the logical but often untrue inference that he would not have lied if he had been innocent of the crime for which he was questioned.

Why would anyone overstate or falsely state his guilt, especially when the *Miranda* warnings instruct him that anything said will be used against him? The answer requires an exploration of why people confess and how they are led to do so, whether they are guilty or innocent.

From toddler years on, we are taught that confession is both social duty and its own reward. In Christian theology, confession is a key to salvation. The law itself encourages the private expiation of guilt by refusing to require the testimony of those most likely to have heard a criminal defendant's confession—spouse, minister, psychiatrist.

Beyond the ubiquitous social pressure to confess, psychological factors make silence virtually impossible for many people when they are interrogated. A universal rule of polite social discourse is to speak when spoken to. Silence conveys arrogance, hostility, rudeness, and, most of all, guilt. Police interrogators are taught to be careful not to provide an excuse for silence by violating the rules of etiquette. At the same time, they are taught to orchestrate environmental cues with stratagems designed both to lull and to intimidate the suspect into talking.

Training courses advise the interrogator in the style of his or her dress (conservative business suit stripped of any badges or other police

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identification), the location and decor of the interrogation room (quiet, remote, and bare, with neither reminders that it is in a police station nor with any tension-relieving small objects for the suspect to fiddle with), the seating arrangement (close to the suspect and at eye level), even the desirability of breath mints to avoid losing the psychological advantage of getting physically "next to" the suspect. Taking notes is strictly forbidden. As Fred Inbau and John Reid advise in their classic manual *Criminal Interrogations and Confessions*, "Avoid creating the impression that you are an investigator seeking a confession or conviction."

The orchestration of environmental cues cannot fully erase the suspect's awareness that the interrogator is who he is. But, after the interrogation begins in earnest, a series of techniques completes the transformation. The foremost is the interrogator's attitude. "The consistently successful interrogator," write Arthur Aubry and Rudolph Caputo in *Criminal Interrogation*, "is the one who can project himself to the suspect as a person in whom the suspect can place his confidence, and as a person whom he can trust."

The watchwords of the interrogation are sympathy, understanding, respect, flattery. Interrogators are thus cautioned to avoid any display of disgust or anger toward the suspect, except as part of a calculated "good guy, bad guy" approach designed to heighten the appearance of sympathy by occasionally showing mock impatience or anger.

Skillfully presented, the *Miranda* warnings themselves sound chords of fairness and sympathy at the outset of the interrogation. The interrogator who advises, who cautions, who offers the suspect the gift of a free lawyer, becomes all the more persuasive by dint of his apparent candor and reasonableness. "Interrogators change reality," notes the Stanford psychologist Philip Zimbardo, who teaches a course in mind control. "It's not a cop—it's your Dutch uncle, your friend, the father you never had. They can change reality very quickly."

Intelligence provides no immunity to the process. Researchers found that FBI agents investigating draft resistance in the mid-1960s had no trouble getting Yale faculty and staff members to incriminate themselves. The major factor prodding them to talk was, as the study put it, the "engaging, middle-class manner" of the FBI agents.

This transformation of the interrogator from adversary to older brother affects those on both sides of the table. Alvin A. Dewey, the famed Kansas Bureau of Investigation special agent, once told a Senate subcommittee in defense of police interrogation practices: "As to the description of an interrogation room, I wish to define it as a room where people can talk in privacy, which is nothing more than an attorney desires in talking to his client or a doctor in talking to his patient." The basic principle, Zimbardo maintains, is also employed by groups as

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exotic as religious cults and as commonplace as door-to-door salesmen: determine the subject's dominant need (be it flattery, respect, sympathy), stimulate and exaggerate the need, then offer to satisfy it in return for the subject's statement (or devotion or money).

Tips from Inbau and Reid's manual:

Sympathize with the subject by telling him that anyone else under similar conditions or circumstances might have done the same thing.

Reduce the subject's guilt feeling by minimizing the moral seriousness of the offense.

Suggest a less revolting and more morally acceptable motivation or reason for the offense than that which is known or presumed.

Here are excerpts from an interrogation:

INTERROGATOR 1: David, you, look at you—you are on the verge of crying right now.
INTERROGATOR 2: I believe you cared for that little girl.
NO. 1: It's tearing you up inside.
NO. 2: I don't believe you're that kind of guy.
NO. 1: You can help yourself by telling the truth.
NO. 2: If you was drinking and you made a mistake, son. . . . If you was drunk—
SUSPECT DAVID MILLER: If I was drunk, if I was sober, I've still got the rest of my life to look at behind bars.
NO. 1: . . . Son, you can only help yourself. No matter what happens, you're going to have to have peace of mind sooner or later.

At the same time, the interrogator is taught to display an air of unwavering confidence in the suspect's guilt and to bolster this by reciting the evidence against the suspect. A number of interrogation manuals, including that used by the National Association of State Directors of Law Enforcement Training, specifically endorse the use, if necessary, of falsified evidence.

Recent reports of criminal appeals show that police interrogators used, among other things, fabricated reports of physical evidence, statements from nonexistent eyewitnesses, and phony lie detector results. In one recent case, a Raleigh, North Carolina, police detective put his own bloody fingerprint on a knife and told the suspect the print had been conclusively shown to be that of the suspect. In each of these cases of falsified evidence, the appeals courts upheld the use of confessions so obtained.

Fake evidence is consistent with the entire milieu of the interrogation. As Inbau and Reid candidly state: "Whenever the police interrogate a person whom they believe to be guilty of a crime they are not doing so for *his* benefit. Deceit, therefore, is inherent in every question

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asked of the suspect, and in every statement made by the interrogator."

Excerpts from another interrogation:

INTERROGATOR: I don't think you're a criminal, Frank.
SUSPECT FRANK MILLER: No, but you're trying to make me one.
INTERROGATOR: No I'm not, no I'm not, but I want you to talk to me so we can get this thing worked out. . . . Frank, look, you want, you want help, don't you, Frank? . . .

INTERROGATOR: Let it come out, Frank. I'm here, I'm here with you now. I'm on your side, I'm on your side, Frank. I'm your brother, you and I are brothers, Frank. We are brothers, and I want to help my brother. . . .

INTERROGATOR: You killed this girl, didn't you?
MILLER: No, I didn't.
INTERROGATOR: Honest, Frank? It's got to come out. You can't leave it in. It's hard for you, I realize that, but you've got to help yourself before anybody else can help you. And we're going to see to it that you get the proper help. This is our job, Frank. This is our job. This is what I want to do.
MILLER: By sending me back down there [to prison].
INTERROGATOR: Wait a second now, don't talk about going back down there. First thing we have to do is let it all come out. Don't fight it because it's worse, Frank, it's worse. It's hurting me because I feel it. I feel it wanting to come out, but it's hurting me, Frank. You're my brother, I mean we're brothers. All men on this, all men on the face of this earth are brothers, Frank, but you got to be completely honest with me.

Advocates of these techniques, such as Fred Inbau, an emeritus professor of law at Northwestern University, draw a line between these psychological tactics and the use of physical threats or actual violence. Only the latter, they maintain, can produce confessions from the innocent. Evidence from the Korean prisoner of war studies and elsewhere, however, refutes this distinction. Indeed, social scientists have learned that physical coercion is often the least effective way of getting confessions. Psychological coercion produces more true confessions—and more false ones as well.

One classic experiment with college students documented how completely normal individuals, even without being placed in a stress-inducing setting, can be persuaded that their view of reality is wrong. Eight students were shown a set of lines of clearly identical length. Seven had been coached ahead of time to state that the lines were of different lengths. Of fifty students cast in the role of the eighth unwitting person in the group, only thirteen succeeded in consistently rejecting the majority's clearly erroneous judgment.

Studies by psychologist Elizabeth F. Loftus, author of *Eyewitness Testimony,* and others have consistently found that memory is extraordi-

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narily malleable—particularly in the face of persistent and suggestive questioning. In the Peter Reilly case in Connecticut, police repeatedly insisted that they knew he had killed his mother. Reilly finally adopted the police version (asking his chief interrogator during the same interview if he could come and live with the officer and his family). Later evidence was discovered that proved his innocence.

But in the two Miller cases (unrelated) whose interrogations were excerpted earlier, substantial circumstantial evidence linked the defendants to the respective murders—brutal stabbings of teenage girls. (David Miller was sentenced to death for killing his girlfriend in Knoxville, Tennessee. Frank Miller was sentenced to life in prison for murdering a farm girl in East Amwell Township, New Jersey.) In both cases, however, the interrogators repeatedly lied and made promises of help that never came to pass. Moreover, in the Frank Miller case, New Jersey state police detective Charles Boyce made up eyewitness accounts and physical evidence linking Miller to the crime.

These cases thus raise questions far more problematic than sending innocent persons to prison, which is unquestionably something everyone opposes. Should the police be allowed to commit fraud in the pursuit of justice? Even if the guilty do not deserve protection from such tactics, is it necessary to shield the guilty in order to prevent police from using the same methods on those eventually shown to be innocent?

Largely by default, it has been left to the courts to wrestle with these issues and to set standards of acceptable police conduct. Thus, the questions have been approached at an oblique angle, not by asking what is the wisest public policy, but by divining the pronouncements of the United States Constitution, which states that an accused shall not "be compelled to be a witness against himself" (Fifth Amendment) and shall enjoy the rights to "due process of law" (Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments) and "assistance of counsel" (Sixth Amendment).

Torture itself was a common and accepted tool of police procedure not many years before Justice Felix Frankfurter asserted that ours was an accusatorial, not an inquisitorial, system. Even after widespread police brutality was documented by a presidential commission in 1931, the "third degree" had many defenders. They pointed to its undeniable effectiveness in winning convictions and argued that criminals with no respect for the law deserved no special rights once they were caught.

One case, which was as much about race relations as about crime, ended the era of open advocacy of torture and began the Supreme Court's long struggle with police interrogation. Raymond Stewart, a white farmer, was found brutally murdered at his home in Kempner County, Mississippi, on March 30, 1934. Hours later, a deputy sheriff arrested a black man named Yank Ellington and took him to the victim's

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home where an angry mob awaited. Ellington was dangled twice from a tree limb and later whipped at length, but he persisted in protesting his innocence. A day later the same deputy sheriff took Ellington on a drive to Alabama and beat him severely until Ellington agreed to sign whatever he was told to. In connection with the same case, two other black men, Ed Brown and Henry Shields, were put in jail, forced to strip, and whipped by several white men who took turns with the buckle end of a leather strap.

As a judge on the Mississippi Supreme Court later described the scene, the prisoners "confessed in every matter of detail as demanded by those present" and, as the whipping continued, "changed or adjusted their confessions in all particulars of detail so as to conform to the demands of their torturers." All three defendants were convicted and sentenced to death within a week of the murder. The Mississippi Supreme Court twice upheld the convictions.

The U.S. Supreme Court reversed the convictions in *Brown v. Mississippi* on February 17, 1936. In a unanimous decision written by Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes, the Court found it necessary to declare that "the rack and torture chamber may not be substituted for the witness stand."

Subsequent cases exposed more subtle forms of police terror: removing the defendant late at night from his cell and driving him to a dark and remote location for questioning, depriving the defendant of food and sleep, engaging in long hours of secret grilling by relay teams of interrogators.

But the Court's unanimity in condemning torture quickly dissolved when confronted with more subtle forms of coercion. The Supreme Court shied away from policing the police with any kind of direct prohibitions on certain tactics. The Court perceived its job as protecting the voluntariness of the confessions of individual defendants. So it embarked on the psychoanalytic task of weighing the defendant's maturity and intelligence against the interrogator's tactics to determine, as the Court often put it, "whether the defendant's will was overborn"—all this by paging through trial transcripts without benefit of training in psychology or any personal acquaintance with the interrogators or the defendants.

On one level, of course, the search for voluntariness was both inevitable and correct. No system of justice is so solicitous of defendants that it bars them from volunteering evidence of their guilt to the authorities. And no system forces a defendant to go to trial when he or she wants to plead guilty. To put it the other way, as the Supreme Court once succinctly did, "A confession by which life becomes forfeit must be the expression of free choice."

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Lurking beneath this language of free will has been another issue. Most judges have perceived, correctly or not, that interrogation of suspects is essential to the effective solution of crimes—regardless of any high rhetoric from Justice Frankfurter about the Star Chamber and the Fifth Amendment. As a result, the debate about voluntariness has been shadowed by a mostly unspoken struggle about how to strike the balance between the conflicting goals of effective law enforcement and fairness to the accused. Justice Frankfurter himself signaled the hidden agenda when he wrote, somewhat opaquely: "A statement to be voluntary of course need not be volunteered."

Given the vagaries of individual cases and the philosophical predilections of judges, the outcome of cases ranged wildly—with courts approving police tactics in one instance and condemning the same tactics in another. This frustrated the police and everyone else in the criminal justice system by failing to produce any clear guidelines for what conduct by interrogators was permissible and what was not.

In *Miranda v. Arizona*, the Supreme Court acknowledged that police needed clearer guidance than the Court had been giving with its vague voluntariness test. The Court went on to describe at length the psychological nature of modern interrogation techniques, quoting from earlier editions of some of the same interrogation manuals quoted in this article and concluding:

> It is obvious that such an interrogation environment is created for no purpose other than to subjugate the individual to the will of his examiner. This atmosphere carries its own badge of intimidation. To be sure, this is not physical intimidation, but it is equally destructive of human dignity.

Based on this finding—that police questioning of suspects in private inherently coerces defendants to incriminate themselves—the Court could have ruled flatly that such interrogation violates the Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination. That would have required that any interrogation at a police station be conducted in the presence of the suspect's lawyer or a neutral magistrate. It would have effectively ended the two-tier system of criminal justice—one private, one public. Instead, the Court allowed tactics that it found violative of the right against self-incrimination to continue as long as suspects agreed to submit to them. The Court assumed that a recital of warnings could adequately educate a suspect to decide intelligently whether to undergo questioning unaided by counsel.

The justices who dissented from the *Miranda* opinion assumed—as did everyone else after the opinion was released on Monday, June 13, 1966—that the new *Miranda* warnings were tantamount to a ban on

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station-house interrogation. Everyone recognized that, from the suspect's point of view, nothing can be gained and everything can be lost by talking to the authorities without one's lawyer—and everyone assumed that the *Miranda* warnings would effectively communicate this message to most suspects.

That confession rates have remained largely unchanged since *Miranda* is testimony both to psychological realities that no court could alter and to the flawed logic of the *Miranda* majority ruling. The compulsion to talk when one is accused of wrongdoing arises in part from the belief that silence is an admission of guilt. What most people do not understand, and what the *Miranda* warnings fail to explain, is that, under the Fifth Amendment, silence after arrest and *Miranda* warnings cannot be used against the defendant.

Not only are the *Miranda* warnings incomplete, they can be positively misleading in some circumstances. Last year, for instance, the Supreme Court held that when police have obtained an illegal, and thus inadmissible, initial confession, they can question the suspect again without telling him that the first confession cannot be used in court. All that is needed to advise the suspect of his rights on the second interrogation, the Court said, is the standard *Miranda* warning. But the standard warning, which advises that *anything* said can be used against the suspect, implies in that situation that the first confession *can* be used against the suspect.

These are but quibbles compared to the root problem of *Miranda*: it asks police to solve crime but to protect suspects from police investigations, and it assumes that these suspects can receive adequate advice and counseling about their constitutional rights from adversaries who would like nothing more than to see those rights surrendered.

While *Miranda* has done little to change the dynamics of the interrogation process or the techniques used by police, it has affected the ex post facto analysis by courts about whether a particular confession should be admitted into evidence. *Miranda* has shifted the legal inquiry from whether the confession was voluntarily given to whether the *Miranda* rights were voluntarily waived.

There are occasional—and well-publicized—cases where the defendant has won a ruling that his confession cannot be used against him because of such a *Miranda* violation. Generally, however, the shift in focus has proven to be a boon to police. For one thing, the issue is tidier. Staccato *Miranda* conversations, with their uniform statements and check-the-box answers, are easier for courts to evaluate than sprawling hours-long interrogations. When a suspect says yes, he understands his *Miranda* rights, and yes, he waives them, he is generally taken at his word no matter how ignorant his hapless lawyer may later try to prove

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him. (One study of 7,000 felony cases found that defendants tried to get confessions suppressed in only 6.6 percent of the cases and succeeded in only 0.17 percent of the cases.)

This was not an inevitable result of the *Miranda* decision itself but flowed from the post-*Miranda* decisions of the Supreme Court under Chief Justice Warren Burger. With one or two exceptions, the Court has voted to make it easy for police to show a valid waiver of rights, and at the same time it has taken a forgiving approach to police failures to give *Miranda* warnings. Moreover, when it has been concluded that a suspect waived his rights voluntarily, courts have often leaned on this finding to conclude that the entire subsequent interrogation was properly conducted, even though that is supposed to remain a separate inquiry.

In one recent case, the Mississippi Supreme Court found that Howard Monteville Neal's murder confession was voluntarily given and his waiver of *Miranda* rights intelligently made. At the time of his confession, on the third day of interrogation, Neal was a twenty-seven-year-old man with a second-grade education, a tested IQ of from 54 to 60, and organic brain disease. The Mississippi Supreme Court emphasized that he had been given his *Miranda* warnings on several occasions and had never asked for a lawyer.

In another case, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit noted that murder suspect Carl Elson Shriner had been given *Miranda* warnings three times during the ten hours from his arrest to his confession at 2:00 A.M. Disbelieving Shriner's contention that he had asked for a lawyer and asked for questioning to stop (the prosecutor who interrogated him denied it), the court found that "Shriner offers little in support of his contention" that his confession was involuntary. The court continued, "He merely notes that intensive questioning lasted for around five hours, during which period he remained handcuffed in a small room except for trips to use the lavatory, and that his girlfriend was present in an adjacent room in an emotionally and physically distraught state."

Thus, *Miranda* in many instances has been used to draw a shroud over the criminal interrogations that the decision was intended to bring into the open. A decision by the United States Supreme Court in December 1985 pulled back the curtain somewhat, although how far is as yet uncertain.

The case concerned the interrogation of Frank Miller, which was excerpted earlier (p. 373). By divided votes, the New Jersey Supreme Court and a federal appeals court held Miller's confession to have been voluntarily given. The Supreme Court decided a technical issue—how much deference a federal court on habeas corpus appeal should pay to a state court's finding that a confession was voluntary. The high court said

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that federal courts should decide this issue independently, without great deference to the state court's findings, and it sent the case back to the federal appeals court for further examination of the circumstances of Miller's confession.

The interrogation of Miller by New Jersey police detective Charles Boyce used techniques straight from police interrogation manuals—including fake evidence, false ploys of sympathy, and misleading and persistent promises that Miller would get psychiatric help, not a prison term. But the case is unusual in that a tape of the entire interrogation survived. The usual practice is to save only a tape of the formal confession made at the end of the interrogation. In this case, however, just at the point that Boyce was calling in a stenographer, Miller collapsed in apparent shock and could not be revived until he was hospitalized, requiring that the interrogation tape be used.

The Supreme Court's decision to send the case back to the lower courts left undecided the issue of how much deceit and trickery will be deemed too much. The Supreme Court said only that "tactics for eliciting inculpatory statements must fall within the broad constitutional boundaries imposed by the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of fundamental fairness."

In another recent case, the Supreme Court approved police lying to a suspect's lawyer and failing to tell the suspect that the lawyer was trying to reach him. The lawyer had called the Cranston, Rhode Island, police headquarters one evening and was told that police were "through" with her client for the night and would not interrogate him. Later that evening, the police obtained a murder confession from the man. The majority opinion written by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who has emerged as a leading advocate in the rolling back of rights established by the Warren Court, stressed that the suspect had validly waived his *Miranda* rights and asserted that confessions "are essential to society's compelling interest in finding, convicting and punishing those who violate the law." In a sharp dissent, Justice John Paul Stevens said that the majority had "flouted the spirit of our accusatorial system of justice" and "justifie[d] police deception of the shabbiest kind."

As Justice O'Connor's statement about the importance of confessions illustrates, the key to any judicial decision on interrogation issues, when stripped of the trappings of legal dogma, often lies in the same question laymen ask: Just how important is interrogation in the arsenal of police investigative techniques? Not very, according to recent research. In the only large-scale empirical study of confessions in this country, the Institute of Criminal Law and Procedure at Georgetown University examined the results of three thousand cases in six big-city jurisdictions. The study was conducted with federal funds for the Justice Depart-

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ment's National Institute of Justice. Debunking the long-held assumptions of most criminal justice experts that interrogation is essential to solving crime, the study found that confessions did not guarantee that defendants would plead guilty and, further, did not increase the odds that defendants would be found guilty if they went to trial.

In half of the six jurisdictions examined, the researchers found that a confession did make it more likely that the suspect would plead guilty rather than go to trial; but in the other three jurisdictions, the opposite was found. Analyzing the results of a number of robbery and burglary cases that went to trial, the study found a high conviction rate, whether or not the suspect had confessed. In only two of the six jurisdictions (and then in only one of the two categories of cases) did a confession increase the prosecution's chances of winning by a statistically significant amount.

The researchers interviewed a number of prosecutors seeking an explanation for these surprising findings. The reason cited over and over again was the jurors' distrust of the police, particularly in the wake of any kind of police scandal no matter how unrelated to interrogation. The prosecutors also disliked confession cases because, once a confession had been obtained, there was usually little effort to gather other evidence. As one prosecutor put it: "We've been telling the cops to forget about confessions and statements. Get physical evidence. You're crazy if you even use a statement. If you have one eyewitness and a statement, you've got nothing!"

This is a typical conflict in a criminal justice system with divided goals: the police are interested in closing cases, and the prosecutors are interested in winning convictions and avoiding unnecessary controversies about defendants' rights. The Supreme Court could conclude on this evidence that the interests of the criminal justice system, not to mention the rights of the accused, would best be served by throwing out the *Miranda* apparatus and installing a simple rule of no interrogation without the presence of a neutral party or the suspect's lawyer.

That is unlikely to happen. *Miranda* has persisted this long because it allows us to celebrate our values of individualism without paying any real price. As a cultural symbol, *Miranda* stands for the enshrinement of individual rights over the need of the state for efficiency, equal justice for rich and poor before the law, the right to be presumed innocent, and the demand that the police follow the law while enforcing it. That it has managed to fail in any real sense to reform police conduct, that it serves interests opposite to those intended by its authors—this shows only that *Miranda* in twenty years has been transformed from a tool of law into an icon for our conflicting ideals.

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LETTER FROM POLAND

Private Lives

THOMAS SWICK

Returning to Warsaw for the first time in three years, I was reminded again of what an agreeable city it is to walk in. The air is relatively pure, the streets are safe and clean, and there are no shortages of parks or tree-lined ways. It is a city that has not yet been overtaken by the automobile: pedestrians—who fill the streets at all hours of the day—silently rule, causing little Fiats to sit idling as they pass. The recently depressed economy has adequately kept the downtown free from the machinery of builders and planners, and when walking, one gets a pleasing sense of a city untouched by urban renewal. Similarly, the fine stucco facades of nineteenth-century houses are not hidden by commercial signs. A street such as Nowy Swiat—on which Joseph Conrad lived for a time—could be convincingly used, after only the smallest cosmetic touches, in a film of his life. And while the city continues to expand at the edges, its center remains familiar and compact. There are two principal shopping streets—Nowy Swiat and Marszalkowska—and walking on either of them, one can half expect—even if, like myself, he has lived no more than two years in the city—to run into someone he knows.

I walked a lot during my recent stay in Poland, as I did during those years of Solidarity and martial law, when there seemed always to be something to see. The flower peddlers—old, frightful women from the country—were just as I remembered them, as were the more comforting "woda sodowa" (soda water) vendors, standing white-coated by their parasoled carts. Though in the underground passage the sellers of Indian dresses and plastic shopping bags seemed to have vanished, former hot dog vendors still filled their rolls with dollops of stewed mushrooms, or sold "zapiekanki" (long baguette halves smothered in more fungi and melted cheese) from their trailers.

Marszalkowska Street was getting a facelift: a corner of the monumental Constitution Place had been blasted to a whiteness no doubt not seen since its Stalinist start. Unfortunately the mannequins in the shop windows below had enjoyed no such remodeling, and they stared out from under ferocious shocks of hair in their usual frumpy ensembles. Inside the shops one found similar styles, yet also well-tailored coats of tweed or herringbone (some with labels in English for export) costing half the average monthly worker's salary (which is eighteen thousand zlotys). Food stores were the real surprise, with all sorts of things—sauces, candies, pretzels, ketchups, as well as meat—returned to the shelves since my departure. Neighborhood groceries were bountiful with all the seasonal fruits and vegetables grown in Poland, while in the city's finest private market, exotica like kiwi and long-departed sweets like halva could be had at three thousand zlotys a kilo. Food lines, though still forming, are no longer a ubiquitous sight in Warsaw.

The English Language College, where I spent two years teaching, was also undergoing renovation, its high gray walls above Saviour Place retouched in yellow. (The director, a Polish Methodist minister, told me he had registered nearly five thousand students this year—a record.) On Embassy Row the Bulgarians had posted color photographs recalling the achievements of forty-one years of socialism, while next door, in a more sophisticated display, the American embassy televised great moments from baseball. The Malaysian

THOMAS SWICK is a writer whose work has appeared in *Commonweal* and the *North American Review*.

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embassy, which had been in a high-rise three years earlier, was now on the other side of the Vistula, owing, it seems, to the ambassador's discovery of the amount of ammunition stored by the Palestinians two floors up. On the roof of the Communist party headquarters on Jerozolimski Avenue, a Polish flag had been added where once there had been a lone Communist flag. In a few sections of the city the first excavations could be seen for the subway, a long-debated but finally begun project. (It is said by some to be ill-favored by the Soviets, who regard it as a great facilitator to underground activities in time of conflict.) The grand old Bristol Hotel, boarded up since 1980, was finally getting refurbished, while two of Warsaw's four "skyscrapers" were still awaiting—as they have been for years—completion. A block west of the Bristol, Victory Place, site of the famous flower cross and numerous demonstrations during martial law, had been unveiled for the first time since then, ending what was probably the longest renovation of an empty square in reparation history.

And the streets as always were full of people: teenage girls hurrying along arm-in-arm with their mothers; young men in blue jeans and U.S. Army-style jackets; young mothers pushing babies in carriages or leaving them parked outside on the sidewalk while they go in to shop; the occasional military bureaucrat in his olive-green uniform; the idle Arab men, not infrequently with blonde escorts; the middle-aged functionaries carrying briefcases so worn that one winces at the thought of the inexorable paperwork they must hold inside; the peasants in for a day's shopping; the stout matrons walking their dachshunds; and the stylish, beautiful young women who, faced with all the inconveniences of shortages and uniformity, can dazzle with the tying of a scarf, the cut of a skirt, the braiding of hair, or even the way they balance their small leather bags low on their hips. Warsaw is, in fact, the only city I know where the women are more fashionable than the mannequins.

I stayed during this visit in the southern Mokotow district with my friend Andrzej, a spry, fair-haired, fifty-year-old engineer who lives with his wife Katarzyna, her mother, and her dog in a one-bedroom apartment of forty-three square meters. Andrzej and Katarzyna are waiting to procure their own apartment, an always complicated process made all the more so by the fact that Andrzej already has an apartment in his name. (It is occupied by his ex-wife.) Their situation is not as bleak as those of some people, however, because for the last two and a half years Andrzej was working in Iraq, for a Belgian firm, and was able to bring home hard currency. Apartments, like almost everything else in Poland, can be purchased with dollars.

The fluency of Western money gives foreign travel an extra dimension: preparation for going abroad can begin early. By the time students are in high school, many have chosen a Western language to master, the most popular being English, French, and German. (Hence the success in Warsaw of the English Language College, the British Council, L'Institut Français, etc.). Russian, which is the second language taught in school, is generally dismissed as being the obligatory and, certainly in a business sense, worthless tongue of the oppressor. Even if one never leaves Poland, the Romance and Saxon languages provide—through books, magazines, and the radio—a much-desired window to the West.

There is a tradition of Polish students going abroad for the summer and working—on Swedish farms, as au pairs in London, in Bavarian kitchens—in jobs they would never take in their own country. After a brief moratorium during martial law, this tradition seems to be continuing. One of my former students, whom I ran into on the street, told me that she had just come back from West Germany, where she had bought a used Volkswagon and a VCR.

The same migratory patterns also exist among the professional classes, but they leave for longer periods and often to more remote places. Scientists, doctors, professors, architects, and engineers frequently travel abroad for a year or more, usually to the West or the Arab world, whether on fellowships, exchanges, foreign contracts, or personal pluck. (There is a wonderfully flexible Polish institution, the "unpaid vacation," which is made generous use of.) A number of the people I met with this time were looking for, or in the process of arranging, stays abroad. Once at a dinner the topic of conversation turned to the current visa policies of foreign embassies, and I found everyone lively and well-versed ("the

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West Germans are the easiest—same-day service; the Austrians are tough") like a group of Americans discussing stocks. Many of the people who make these trips do so without their families, and so carry little of the traveler's enthusiasm, possessing instead a pragmatic appreciation of the economic reality in a country where one must nearly go without eating for three years in order to save enough money to buy a car. One friend of mine, fired from his job in the state agricultural sector, is starting his own pear orchards. Needing money for investments, he went off to America to paint houses for a year, leaving behind a wife and three children. The effect this trend is having on family life, not to mention national productivity, is worthy of study. Reading the weekly paper *Polityka* one day, I thought I'd found such a study in an article entitled "Sleep in Poland, Work Abroad," though starting through it I discovered it concerned only those people in the western provinces who commute each day to jobs in East Germany.

That a good many people return from abroad—even the young and unestablished—is testament to the powerful Polish sense of homeland. (There is a story in Warsaw that during the first weeks of martial law, when the police made the rounds of offices to get records of all the typefaces used, every secretary in the city tapped out the same line: "Lithuania! My fatherland! You are like health," which is the first line of the epic poem "Pan Tadeusz," written in exile by the Polish poet born in Lithuania, Adam Mickiewicz.) The tendency to return is also testament to the particular wretchedness for some of life in Baghdad or Bayonne. The government, counting these returns as ideological victories, does not miss the chance to publicize those of the more famous. *Polityka* carried excerpts of an interview that the pop singer Krzysztof Krawczyk had given to a Polonia newspaper in Toronto shortly before his return after five years abroad. Though used for an obvious purpose, and pertaining to one very specific profession, his comments do reflect the views of many Poles who've been to the States. "Here life is very difficult for artists," he was quoted as saying, "first because the American market is unbelievably hermetic, and second, because you have to fight for your existence. . . . It is life on the run, which also takes its toll. . . . In Poland, an artist doesn't have to clean during the day so he can sing at night. But I won't be able to talk like this in Poland. I'll offend the public, which still thinks that America is Eldorado." He added later: "I'm tired. I don't have any psychological comfort."

On our evening walks with his dog, Andrzej and I would go through the overgrown park near the apartment. "When I got back from Iraq," he told me one night, "I'd come here first thing in the morning and walk for half an hour before work. The dew would still be on the grass and everything would be fresh and green. When I was away, I missed this verdure terribly, my organism missed it." Then he added, recalling perhaps the transits through Belgium: "Still, a human being breathes differently in the West."

On a cold, wet Saturday morning, Andrzej took me and his fifteen-year-old niece, Grazyna, to the Stanislaw Kostka Church in the northern district of Zoliborz. Grazyna was visiting for the weekend from Lublin and wanted to see the grave of Fr. Jerzy Popieluszko. A teacher at her high school, she told us, had been fired for allowing one of his classes to come and lay flowers at the grave during a school trip to Warsaw. There had been no such detours since. Occasionally official city tours drift up to the church on their guides' initiative, but some Americans I met, who were on a group tour of Eastern Europe, told me it had not been on their itinerary.

We parked the car in the street in front of the church, very near the spot where I had stood with a throng, my last Sunday in Poland, at the monthly Mass for the fatherland. Reaching the church gate we found a guard from the Warsaw Steelworks, which had been under Fr. Popieluszko's pastorate and which now provides his grave with twenty-four-hour surveillance. The plot, just to the right of the tall, graceless church, was invisible behind a line of citizens paying their respects. Among them was a group of Polish mountaineers, notable in their embroidered trousers and eagle-feathered caps.

From our place beside the low cordon we could pick out some of the detail in what has become a well-practiced Polish art: the in-memoriam display. Two enormous banners—one red, one white—had been tied to a tree to form the letter *V;* in front of it were crowded

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various memorial wreaths. The largest of these displays, made of bundles of wheat, took the shape of a *P* imposed on top of an anchor, the symbol of the resistance in World War II, which stood for "Polska Walczaca" (Fighting Poland). At its base were gathered separate bouquets and a miniature, in wood, of the Gdansk "three crosses" monument. To the left stood the grave, a large black reflecting tomb in a bright profusion of fresh-cut flowers. The inscription read: "Fr. Jerzy Popieluszko—Martyr for his Faith and Fatherland." Behind the tomb a small orange and black flag of the steelworkers flapped, and a thin birch cross rose as high as the trees. In front, votive candles flickered in glass cups. The bundled steelworker behind the cordon busied himself with the rekindling of flames and the continual placement of proffered flowers.

Further along we found a flower cross, dedicated in memory of Grzegorz Przemyk, a teenager murdered by police, and a cardboard cutout in the shape of Poland to which schoolchildren had affixed, in a blue-and-red jumble, their school badges. The fence beyond was covered with the red-and-white banners of Solidarity. Around the corner a kiosk sold Fr. Popieluszko postcards and pins.

Inside the church an exhibit was set up behind the altar. Walking there we saw that one of the side walls was already fitted with memorial plaques, freshly finished and finely engraved, with the names of professional unions, veterans' organizations, and religious groups from home and abroad. The exhibit itself contained enlarged photographs from the Popieluszko family album, typed excerpts from his sermons, and gifts and mementos sent by painters and artisans from all over Poland. One glazed wooden plaque carried a line of the nineteenth-century poet Cyprian Norwid: "The times are such that it is not enough to work; one must fight and suffer." There was also a board entitled "Fr. Jerzy's Route to Martyrdom," tacked to which were grainy, black and white photographs—of the road, the car, the reservoir, etc.—in a modern representation of the Stations of the Cross.

On the way home we stopped at the bookstore near the apartment, the largest in Warsaw, with the appealing name of "House of Books." (It was the one Saturday of the month when shops are kept open but workers are given time off.) I had been asking friends if there were any good books out and had been repeatedly told, "If you see it in the bookstore, it can't be any good." This meant that respectable writers were publishing now in the underground press and that the rare exceptions, and the important translations, were sold out instantly, leaving the dross.

Andrzej went upstairs to the technical section while Grazyna and I took our places in a short line, like at a grocery, to wait for a metal handbasket to become available. (Unlike most Polish bookstores, which keep their books behind counters and then take requests, this one allowed browsing, though with a basket, in the naive belief, I think, that if someone has a basket into which to put a book it will not find its way into his pocket.)

It is a frustrating exercise to watch people browsing in a bookstore and know that their deliberations are postponing your own. Yet it was interesting to see how brief, in many cases, the deliberations were. When we eventually got our baskets, we learned why. There were a few interesting items: an oversized book, handsomely illustrated, on Polish Jewry (with editions in English and German); the collected essays from *Polityka* of Jan Rem (nom de plume of the government press spokesman Jerzy Urban), which looked to be in full stock; a few well-known plays of Wyspianski and Witkiewicz in the State Publishers Institute edition. But the great Polish classics of Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Norwid, and Sienkiewicz were unavailable, as were the works of modern writers such as Milosz, Herbert, Baranczak, Zagajewski, Konwicki, Brandys, and Nowakowski. The former's absence was owing to the principles of supply and demand, the latter's to ideology.

A few days later I drove with Andrzej to Lodz to visit a friend of his who had gone into private business. This, I had heard more and more, was the way to go in Poland, not so much for workers but for the intelligentsia: high-school teachers, history majors, sacked journalists, frustrated actors, and lawyers. "It was fashionable for a while to drive a cab," a former Solidarity journalist told me as he smoothed a piece of pottery in his kitchen. "But you can make more money from this, without the hassle." Oftentimes while sitting in people's apartments I would be brought gift-like items—miniature picture frames,

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leather watchbands, silver brooches—that had been manufactured in the bedrooms-cum-workshops of neighbors and friends. Such "cottage industries" are an alternative to going abroad, especially for those whose professions do not translate well into another language, a way of removing oneself from official society without the intimation of fecklessness that "dropping out" has carried in America. Four years ago I heard Andrzej tell a distant uncle about his sister, a psychologist, who with her husband, an electrical engineer, had bought an abandoned farm in the Mazurian Lake district and had begun raising pigs. The elderly gentleman, sitting in his small Warsaw villa amidst the depleted clutter of his family's pre-war possessions, had listened interestedly, then said: "Marvelous. I'm delighted to hear it. If you ask me, that's the most sensible path for intelligent young people under this system."

We drove in a southwesterly direction on the two-lane highway, carried smoothly over the flat land in Andrzej's new Ford. (With his petrodollars from Iraq he had bought the car in Germany for the specific reason that it runs on diesel fuel, the only gasoline not currently rationed in Poland.) At the sides of the highway were single, box-shaped farmhouses that, minus their windows and doors, might have resembled concrete bunkers. Some were sloppily built of brick. Behind them stretched small fields of wheat or barley, cabbage and potatoes; at places one or two mud-encrusted cows grazed, their necks in chains. Strong workhorses pulled peasants in rickety wooden wagons along the shoulder of the road. At times we passed a birch grove or glimpsed a graceful church spire in the distance, but, otherwise, nothing relieved the forlornness of the contemporary Polish countryside.

Andrzej had had no trouble taking a few days off from work. Things had been slow, he said, since his return; the government had no money for building, so no new projects crossed his desk. He had been irritated lately, too, by the appearance in the office of a retired policeman in the full-time role of informer. I was curious about how this was arranged (Did the policeman come around for an interview? Did he present a resumé?) and asked Andrzej about it. "It's simple," he said. "The director receives a memorandum from a military bureau stating, simply, that Mr. So-and-So will be arriving on such-and-such a date, working at such-and-such a position. And when he comes, he has his own office all ready for him."

"Does anybody talk to him?"

"Nobody."

"Does he do any work?"

Andrzej was beginning to find my questions laughable. "How could he? He has no engineering training. His sole purpose is to listen and observe and report back on what he finds. And for that he makes more money than I do, while still receiving his retirement pension from the police force." It was this last item that maddened Andrzej the most; he had long ago accepted the ways of totalitarian intelligence. In fact, the informer at his office before martial law, he claimed, had been a likable and unambitious fellow who would spend most of the day in philatelic pursuits. But, Andrzej stressed, he had not been a policeman.

We came into one of the new western districts of Lodz and found Piotr's house on an unpaved road between a low settlement of single houses and a large expanse of high-rise apartments. From the outside, the house looked not so much like a house that had been constructed as a house that had been hollowed out of a two-story block of crude concrete, with openings punched out in the form of windows and doors. Inside, supper was ready and Piotr and his wife Anna motioned to us to squeeze in with the three children already seated around the kitchen table. Set before us were large blocks of yellow cheese, a bowl of snow-white farmer's cheese, rye and whole-meal breads, ham and kielbasa, tomatoes, peppers, and hard-boiled eggs, all sliced on separate plates: that standard Polish supper which is a repeat—or, depending on your thinking, a preview—of the standard Polish breakfast.

Piotr, who is twelve years younger than Andrzej, looked like the weary but contented provider. He, too, had been an engineer with a state firm and had been awarded the house—on a special payment system—for one of his projects. Also like Andrzej, he had been active in Solidarity and had become one of its leaders in his enterprise. A few weeks after martial law was declared, he was fired. The then-unfinished house, however, was already in his name.

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He had no hope of getting—and no desire to get—another job with a state enterprise and so, rather inevitably, went into private business. He bought forty acres of land and a dilapidated manor house about fifteen miles from Lodz. His first effort in farming—a crop of strawberries—failed miserably, so he turned to wheat. So as not to be idle during the winter months, he converted part of the manor into a workshop, and there started making what he had long noticed was needed in Poland: equestrian hurdles. Both Piotr and Anna are equestrians; they have ridden since they were children and have competed occasionally in shows. Going around to these events, Piotr discovered the deplorable state of Polish hurdles and saw in them a calling.

He bought tools and materials and for the first year and a half worked by himself. It was difficult going, but because of the almost total absence of competition (there is only one other firm, also private, in Poland making hurdles), his name became known and orders came in. At present he employs three men. When an order arrives he does the overall design of hurdle shape and size, and he and his workers carry out the execution of the finished product. Until now he has had no difficulty obtaining the wood—pine and spruce—but he has suffered setbacks with the breakdown of machines, the unavailability of parts, the waywardness of employees. In a country where one must appear and sign a list every morning for three months in order to buy a washing machine, the efforts of running an industry, however modest, appear herculean, and the headaches unending. Piotr often does not get home until after the children are in bed. Eventually he may be able to enter his hurdles on the foreign market, a venture that could easily push the family into the ranks of the affluent, a prospect troubling to Anna. For all the serious uncertainties of this new life, however, Piotr is unshaken. "I'd rather be doing it for horses," he says, "than for certain people." He adds that, of the thirty students from his class at the Polytechnic, only one now works with a state firm; all the rest have gone into private business.

One of these, a neighbor, we visited before leaving the next day. His house on the outside showed a terrace and, on the whole, a less primitive appearance than Piotr's. Inside, it boasted all the markings of the nouveaux riches. Wojtek, the friend, invited us in for coffee (which was served in porcelain demitasses) and told a familiar story of Solidarity activities, of getting fired, of starting from scratch—in his case with manufacturing plastic tablecloths and Christmas-tree balls. He assured us, in case the house hadn't, that there were enough people around with money to buy such things, not only in Poland but in the other bloc countries, such as Romania and Bulgaria. He looked pleased with himself, smiling frequently through a shaggy beard and sitting at ease in a blue sweat suit. His teenage son had started his own firm, he told us casually, and has no desire to abandon his profits for an education. He is, for the moment, conveniently failing his baccalaureate exam as a temporary means of evading military service. After coffee we were taken up on the terrace to see the swimming pool—a jarring sight in this textile city of an impoverished country whose estival climate can provoke the expression "We're having a mild winter this summer." Leading us out, Wojtek turned pensive and said, "So it is. The only thing is I miss the role we had in Solidarity. Now we have no influence." In parting he gave me two Christmas-tree balls—firm, hollow globes of orange and gold velour—and thinking back on Wojtek, the small bearded figure in the blue sweat suit, I had a revelation of Poland transformed into, not, alas, a second Hungary, but rather a sort of vast Santa's workshop, full of clever, thwarted people frittering the years away on baubles for the Communist world.

There have been no measures yet to discourage the growth of entrepreneurship in Poland, and one gets the impression that the government more than tolerates it. On the one hand entrepreneurship allows the people goods that the state itself has not supplied, and so fills a need. On the other hand, and much more important, it helps accomplish the desired division of society, which has been the military's aim ever since midnight of December 12, 1981, when it caused every telephone in the country to go dead. For, instead of large, cohesive workplaces, there are now more and more small, self-reliant industries. The visitor to Poland today quickly sees that, whatever the current consensus on the status of Solidarity as a political force, there is an inarguable decline in solidarity as a social

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element. By drastically raising prices the government has, in a staggered series of swoops, concentrated the population's energies on *providing*, to the exclusion of almost everything else. Even when this has not caused a division in the family or in the work force, it has created a society of people divided by the daily struggle to get by. The average adult citizen now has little time, energy, or savings for anything outside the immediate need for sustenance, be it entertaining or the riskier business of political activity. "Everybody's busy looking out for himself," I heard repeatedly. "Everybody's in pursuit of money." (This situation has in it many elements of the rat race and must come as a profound shock to Poles who have returned after a few years in the West, thinking that they are leaving such economic competition behind.)

With the weariness has come a deterioration of the social graces. In an interview in *Polityka*, film director Krzysztof Kieslowski observed: "The Japanese understood perfectly that either they behave kindly to one another, or they push each other into the sea."

Interviewer: And in Poland, people are not kind?

Kieslowski: There was a time when they were.

Interviewer: You mean after the war.

Kieslowski: That I don't remember. But 1981 I remember.

"In America," a friend tried to explain to me, "it's easy for people to be friendly on a superficial level because they haven't, as a nation, experienced difficult times. They haven't been tested. But when people have been through all that we have in the last five years—with all the disappointment and now suspicion—casual pleasantries are irrational."

I heard many tales of rudeness and alienation inside Poland. "People are much more closed within themselves than when you were last here," friends told me. "No one knows whom he can trust. People have retreated back into the family—into the security of what is known. Look at the streets at night, and you'll see what we mean. People don't go out—they're too tired, and even if they weren't, they couldn't afford to." Once I heard a young woman tell of missing the food lines: "At least there we were as one—bitching and complaining together. Now we're all dispersed, and we go about the shops without a word." These are but a partial list of the tactical successes of the modern Polish army.

Not to be disparaged by the regime, too, is the creation, through entrepreneurship, of a class more privileged than itself. As the gap widens in Poland between rich and poor, the rulers' status as the primary target of the animus of the masses may come to be challenged. As one Pole suggested to me: "If there ever arises a true workers' revolt, I honestly wonder whether the poor workers will not go after the heads of the owners of swimming pools rather than those of modest colonels who live with their families in three-room apartments."

Back in Warsaw I did notice, as I was coming out of a movie theater, how deserted the streets are at night and how ill-lit. After visiting the capital in the early 1960s, V. S. Pritchett wrote: "There is always something going on in a Warsaw street at night." In the 1970s, Poles boasted of how East Germans would come to Warsaw for shopping and Russians for a taste of the West (which would include, inevitably, seeing a Western). By the time I got to know Warsaw in 1980, Pritchett's observation was no longer accurate, but there were a lot of parties and invitations to tea. (If, as was once said in France, the Frenchman invites you to a café because he is embarrassed by his home, the Pole invites you to his home because he is embarrassed by his café. Except for those in the Old Town, few Warsaw cafés inspire sociability: the great majority are dingy, smoke-filled, and festooned with at least one slumbering inebriate.)

On this visit, however, it seemed to me that much of that conviviality, which had always been so vital in getting one through the Polish winter, was in regression. Young people are marrying and starting families earlier (Poland has the highest birthrate in Europe), for one thing, and, for another, the general mood does not give rise to merrymaking. If people do go out, they go to the theater (especially students, who have the time to stand in line for desirable tickets) or concerts. Movies, though also well attended by the young, are more at the mercy of the crisis. After the performances, there are few places left to go but home. Meanwhile East Berlin has become, after Budapest, the showcase of the bloc, and

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even Moscow, some friends suggested, is now livelier than Warsaw.

As a result of this situation, Polish television has emerged as a substitute, if not always a medium, for entertainment. Several homes I visited had new large color sets, often brought from West Germany. In one household the television had come with a remote-control channel changer that, with its dozen or so buttons, gave its owner an agreeable sensation of having freedom to choose from among more than the two government-run stations.

Evening television viewing often begins at eight, just after the news, although as a guest I was allowed to watch what I pleased. The newscaster was new to me, but the delivery—in that plaintive, oddly soothing female voice—instantly familiar. When joined by the other members of the household, I remembered, too, how much fun news watching with Poles can be for its cabaret-like ripostes. The picture of a well-known Soviet leader appears on the screen to the hopeful cry of someone in the living room: "Dead?" One evening a neighborhood festival in Zoliborz is reported on at length as the first item on the news. "Ach, the government does something for the people, so they must congratulate themselves" is the response. The footage of Polish and Soviet fighter planes racing through the skies in a maneuver entitled "Friendship 85" creates a boisterous communal guffaw.

There is precious little news, mostly announcements of Party meetings—the committees bearing titles so cumbersome it takes much of the thirty minutes to spit them out—and features. A current topic now is drug addiction among Polish youth, a forbidden subject during the Gierek years (drugs were supposedly a problem of capitalist countries) that is now overstated, some feel, to avoid discussing the real conundrums, such as the economy. There seems also to be an editorial policy of including at least one derogatory remark about the United States in each evening's broadcast. These can be indirect: "Today marks the twelfth anniversary of the military takeover in Chile. The present regime is one of repression and terror. It enjoys the support of the United States." Or, they may come out of nowhere: "In California today a man fully clothed led a naked man on a leash."

Yet for all its propaganda, Polish television can be remarkably good, especially to someone accustomed to the provincialism of American TV. A small sampling from a week's program while I was there included theater—*Antigone* from the Anthology of Classic Drama Series and Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew;* a Franco-Polish costume drama on the life of Balzac (shown on Sunday afternoons and watched, in our household, through dinner); a German travel documentary on Athens; an old David Attenborough nature film on penguins; an excellent show from France on the French tradition in romantic songs, rich with clips of performances and penetrating interviews; and nightly films and serials, albeit not the latest, from Australia, Japan, Czechoslovakia, Canada, England, the Soviet Union, the United States, as well as Poland.

I visited a few of my former students, including Urszula, who, unlike most of them, has continued with English. She is a pretty, amusing, not atypical second-year university student, now married and with a child on the way. I found her and the father-to-be, Marcin, a callow first-year history major, in a comfortable if spartanly furnished apartment overlooking a large park in the southern part of Warsaw. The apartment had been procured for them by Urszula's father.

It is a matter of absolutely no ignominy in Poland to be financially dependent on one's parents. Urszula and Marcin, as they cheerfully told me, plan to be so for at least the next five years, until Marcin gets his degree. While Urszula's studies are pragmatic—she has wanted for years to be an English teacher—Marcin is more of a pure scholar, pursuing knowledge for knowledge's sake, which is convenient, for what awaits the citizen with a degree in history? "I might," says Marcin thinking ahead to that distant, lettered day, "establish a flower business."

One senses the huge dissimilarities between student life in Poland and that in the United States. Urszula eats dinner every day at her parents', who live nearby; when the baby is born, that is where it will play while she attends lectures. Marcin, his love of learning aside, feels no impetus to get a job, for, as he asks with impeccable logic, "Why should I work when I could never make as much money as my parents now give me?" With both sets of parents providing, in the best of

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Polish traditions, Urszula and Marcin constitute, if you will, a two-salaried household. Having a child—an imponderable for some American couples a decade older—poses no dilemma for these unemployed students.

An increased birthrate is, psychologists tell us, a normal development in a country after such cataclysmic times as Poland has gone through. In Poland it is also explained in part by the influence of the Catholic Church's teachings. In a peculiar way it seems related, too, to the dire prospects facing everyone; instead of worrying about all that might be unavailable for a child—bottles, diapers, shoes—people see a child as one thing that is available. In a country where people spend their lives waiting for apartments, telephones, passports from the government, the birth of a child becomes a miraculous gift in more than the physiological sense, for it is one thing that can be achieved independently of the state. By making a new life, one reassumes control of one's own.

It would be imprudent to suggest that there is a strategy, but one cannot take note of this baby boom without wondering about its future political consequences. For the children are, literally, the sons and daughters of Solidarity. These children's parents will teach them the history lessons omitted at school and will instill in them the ideals of Solidarity and a sense of allegiance to country rather than regime. For this, the more children there are, the better. To put it as one of my former colleagues did, an inspired teacher and father of two: "Reproduction has often been an undercover activity."

Before I left, Urszula brought out a stack of some of the child's future reading material. I had noticed during visits to other homes that the hosts would often retreat to the bedroom and pull out of a dresser drawer the house library of underground literature. The place of concealment I found interesting, because there is a Polish expression "to write for the drawer" ("pisac do szuflady"), which has long been used pejoratively about writers whose work is never read. One wonders if, literary reputations being what they are, a new phrase will emerge—perhaps "pisac do ksiegarni" ("to write for the bookstore")—to describe their lot.

Urszula and Marcin's collection was more extensive than most I'd seen: unbound books with such titles as "The Polish Underground," "Report from Afghanistan," "The Peace Movement and the Soviet Union," "Ballad for Those Far and Near"; tightly worded literary quarterlies; almost illegible copies of underground weeklies; an album packet of enlarged black-and-white photographs chronicling life under martial law; and the ubiquitous Solidarity stamps, in religious or national motifs, beautifully reproduced and with increased denominations, as in a true postal series. Here, also, I saw zloty notes printed up in American dollar designs—seeming to be startlingly authentic—with pictures of Walesa or Pilsudski prominent. With particular pleasure, Marcin showed me a parody series of Polmos (the state liquor enterprise) advertisements for a new line of vodkas, with caricatures of Jaruzelski and Urban gracing the bottles. (This was the only political joke that I came across.) The marketing slogan—part of Solidarity's anti-alcoholism campaign—read: "You drink. You pay. You help the regime."

On my last night in Warsaw I went with Andrzej and Katarzyna to a concert of the Warsaw chamber opera. It was a lavish performance held in a drafty church, the cast outnumbering the spectators. Afterwards we walked back to the bus stop through the neighborhood known as "Behind the Iron Gate." The eponymous gate no longer stands, but there is a palace, once that of the Lubomirski family, that sits at the west end of a long, arbored mall, offering an elegant vista to the motorists and strollers to the east on Marszalkowska Street. The palace, like so much of Warsaw, was destroyed during the war and then rebuilt in its original neoclassical style. Twenty years after reconstruction it was moved slightly, with the use of eleven hydraulic presses and sixteen special tracks, for more perfect alignment with the park.

As the three of us came onto the mall through the trees, about midway between street and palace, a brute form caught us unexpectedly. With a start, we saw a monument planted, as if by mistake, directly in front of the palace. It had obviously gone up recently, for neither Andrzej nor Katarzyna had seen it before. Approaching closer we found an inscription that read: "To those killed in the building of the Polish People's Republic." "To the secret police and their

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ilk," Andrzej said with repugnance. In the darkness it was difficult to make out details: there seemed to be a thick granite foundation atop which two rows of Brobdingnagian figures, some seeming to be in trench coats, rose in gradations to a climactic handshake at the top. Closer to eye level, a single withered carnation lay across the base. I thought of the monument at the Stanislaw Kostka Church to Fr. Popieluszko, which was in every conceivable way—size, aesthetics, sentiment, response—the opposite of this. "I remember Jaruzelski mentioned at the beginning of martial law that he wanted such a memorial built," recalled Katarzyna, shaking her head in disbelief. "But until tonight, I never knew where they had put it." Before leaving the next day I rode a bus down Marszalkowska Street and saw that, like the Iron Gate, the view of the Lubomirski Palace is no more.

Going Out to Saturn

DOLORES STEWART

If you go out there,
you will find no evidence
of lichen or living crystal
or toppled cities.

It's all ammonia rain
and crushed-head moons,
bone-killing cold
and noons that take your breath away.

In that splendor of rings and eons,
you will be one atom of dust
that says of itself, I am,
and nothing listens, and there is no damnation.

Within that empty ship whose orbit is forever,
you may if you wish write letters
or sermons, or make music,
as I make this.

DOLORES STEWART's poems have appeared in *Choice*, the *Massachusetts Review*, *Poetry Northwest*, and many other journals.

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Rostovtzeff in Madison

G. W. BOWERSOCK

The social and economic history of classical antiquity inevitably evokes the memory of M. I. Rostovtzeff, the Russian émigré who was among the pioneers in a field that has now taken a central place in the writing of ancient history. At his death in 1952, after a wasted decade in which he patiently endured the irreversible damages of incompetent surgery, the scholarly world proclaimed his greatness in a succession of admiring necrologies and interpretative studies. His volumes on the social and economic history of the Roman Empire and of the Hellenistic world had already become acknowledged classics of historical scholarship. His excavation at Dura Europus on the banks of the Euphrates had opened up a frontier town that was subject to Parthia and Rome in succession before it finally fell to the Persians in the third century A.D. The remains at Dura Europus, bearing witness to an interwoven Semitic and Graeco-Roman culture at a military and commercial center alongside one of the great rivers of the world, stand as a fitting memorial to the audacious and wide-ranging historian and archaeologist who uncovered them.

Rostovtzeff was born in Kiev in 1870. He acquired distinction as a scholar during his forty-eight years in Russia, but virtually all his most important work came later. He was best known as a professor at Yale, where he left an indelible stamp on the Classics Department through his perhaps overzealous advocacy of archaeology and history at the expense of literature and philology. Yet his excesses were the excesses of greatness, and Arnaldo Momigliano was undoubtedly correct in observing many years ago that Rostovtzeff's exile from Russia after 1918 was ultimately what made him the great man he was. But he did not proceed directly to New Haven. For five years before the appointment at Yale in 1925 Rostovtzeff had been a professor at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

The two years which intervened between Rostovtzeff's departure from Russia and his arrival in Madison had been a time of little happiness. The Rostovtzeffs were not cordially welcomed in Oxford. His assertive manner and un-English breadth of interest succeeded in alienating him from most of the leading scholars there, with the significant exception of J. G. C. Anderson, the future Camden Professor who, as a Scot, also felt something of a foreigner in Oxford. The transformation of Rostovtzeff into the scholar we know began in Madison, and it is apparent from the evidence documenting his five years there that without the University of Wisconsin this transformation might never have taken place at all. The University in Madison fostered the astounding intellectual development of Rostovtzeff in his mature years by providing him with an atmosphere of support and respect. It proved that the vigorous open spirit of a displaced Russian—who had felt so confined in Oxford—could find a congenial home in the American Middle West.

In the preface to the first volume of Rostovtzeff's *History of the Ancient World*, he wrote the following tribute to his first American university:

> I dedicate the book to the University of Wisconsin. In the darkest hour of my life, the University of Wisconsin made it possible for me to resume my learned studies and carry them on without interrup-

G. W. BOWERSOCK, professor of ancient history at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, is the author of several books, including *Julian the Apostate* and *Roman Arabia*.

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tion. During five years which I spent there, I met with constant kindness from my colleagues and unvarying consideration on the part of the University authorities for my requests and my scientific occupations. Nor can I recall without a feeling of gratitude the sympathy of the students. Such an atmosphere lightened the toil of writing this book, and it was addressed in the first instance to the students of Wisconsin.

We should mark these words well—"In the darkest hour of my life." There is no more poignant statement of Rostovtzeff's unhappiness in Oxford and the sense of alienation and loneliness that overwhelmed him upon his separation from the Russia of the old regime, which he always loved.

The arrival of Rostovtzeff in Madison, just as he was approaching his fiftieth birthday, was, therefore, a major event in the history of classical studies in the present century. It was also a somewhat improbable one. In making public here for the first time details of Rostovtzeff's academic life between 1920 and 1925, I rely upon archival material from the University of Wisconsin together with personal reminiscences and private letters that have been generously made available to me. This material vividly illuminates a period in Rostovtzeff's career that has been generally neglected. It tends to confirm the importance of those years, as stated by Rostovtzeff himself, and it contributes new and occasionally disquieting testimony on American university life after the First World War.

A few weeks before Christmas in 1919, the History Department of the University of Wisconsin voted to recommend to the Dean and the President an invitation to Michael Rostovtzeff, formerly of the Imperial University of St. Petersburg, to teach in the academic year 1920–21 at a salary of $5,000. The chairman of the Department, Frederick L. Paxson, met with the Dean and the President personally and then sent a letter explaining the Department's decision in the following terms: "Because of the losses which this Department is certain to suffer next year, it seems to me highly important that provision be made for ancient history that will carry upon its face proof of our intention not to let ancient history suffer from the departure of Professor Westermann." W. L. Westermann had recently accepted an invitation to take up a professorship at Cornell University, and it was this vacancy which Rostovtzeff was to fill, for a year at least. In order to persuade President Birge and Dean Sellery that Rostovtzeff was worth the then exceptionally high salary of $5,000 for a year, the History Department cleverly suggested that he might offer a course in Russian history as well as a survey and seminar in ancient history. On January 3, 1920, the administration agreed to the appointment, and Paxson cabled Rostovtzeff with the offer. Two days later Paxson sent a letter with details of the appointment. He knew that Westermann had once met Rostovtzeff in Paris and spoken with him about Madison. But with a candor and clarity characteristic of all his correspondence, Paxson spelled out the details:

> The work that we should like to have you undertake would include certain of [Westermann's] classes. He has always lectured twice a week to a large class of freshmen of about 200 on elementary ancient history. . . . In addition to this elementary course Professor Westermann has always conducted, sometimes independently and sometimes in conjunction with the Classical Department, his research seminary in some field of ancient history. We should be glad to have you do likewise in a field acceptable to yourself. We have also thought that many of our students would be interested in a lecture course dealing in a general way with the history of Russia, and we are aware that you have conducted work of this sort at various times, so that it would not be outside the field of your interest.

Rostovtzeff wasted no time in accepting this invitation from a faraway place, which, according to rumor, he claimed he had never heard of before. Certainly he must have heard of Madison because of his prior contact with Westermann, but it may well be true that he lacked any clear notion of where Madison was. The rumor goes on to report that once Rostovtzeff had accepted the appointment, he pulled an atlas off the shelf to find out where he would be going. Such a bold decision was both characteristic of his personality and indicative of his unhappiness in England.

The material in the University archives demonstrates that the invitation to Rostovtzeff was largely at the initiative of the departing professor of ancient history, Westermann. Whatever one may think of that controversial scholar, he was among the pioneers in this

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country in the field of ancient economic and social history, and he was one of the very few in the early decades of the century who was in touch with the exciting new currents that Max Weber was generating in Germany. In the *American Historical Review* of July 1915, Westermann had published a major article entitled "The Economic Basis of the Decline of Ancient Culture." In one footnote Westermann cited Rostovtzeff's contribution on agrarian history in the *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften* and commented: "This remarkable article contains the best survey of the combined political-economic development of antiquity that we have. It is indispensable to anyone who wishes to gain a thorough understanding of ancient economic problems and is the source of many of the ideas here presented." Of course, Westermann was also well acquainted with Weber's *Römische Agrargeschichte* of 1891, and in connection with these topics he referred on numerous occasions to Rostovtzeff's pioneering book on the Roman colonate, *Studien zur Geschichte des römischen Kolonats*. Westermann's well-known indebtedness to Eduard Meyer, another major figure in ancient history in Germany, is also visible in the same article. Overall we can see in that piece the intellectual background not only for Westermann's own work in social and economic history but for his choice of Rostovtzeff as an appropriate successor at Madison. Paxson's letter to Dean Sellery, reporting the Department's decision, made reference to Rostovtzeff's appearance at the international congress of historical sciences in Berlin in the year 1908 and quoted from the report of the American delegate on that occasion, none other than the mediaevalist C. H. Haskins. It seems evident that Westermann had brought this testimony to the Department's attention for referral to the Dean.

Obviously by prearrangement, Westermann wrote to Rostovtzeff on the very day on which Paxson sent the official letter describing the proposed appointment. Westermann recalled the evening they had passed together at the Crillon in Paris during the previous June. He indicated that even at that time the possibility of leaving Wisconsin had been present in his mind together with the thought of bringing Rostovtzeff to Madison. In his letter Westermann described the Department's offer in terms of the German educational system in order to make it as clear and attractive as possible. Knowing of Rostovtzeff's interest in papyri, he added remarks about the collection at Madison and observed that he thought Rostovtzeff would be able to carry on his papyrological studies in America.

Westermann's careful preparation of the case for Rostovtzeff in the autumn of 1919 involved, as such academic advocacies always do, a comparative estimate of other candidates, notably American candidates, in the same field. One of the most remarkable documents in the archives of the Wisconsin History Department is a memo, obviously prepared by Westermann though not actually signed by him, on the possible contenders for the vacant position in ancient history. This document provides an arresting picture of one corner of the academic landscape in the America of 1919. Many of the names mentioned there have now been forgotten; but others have not. We may consider the assessments of Westermann as a reflection of his own intellectual directions and tastes. His top candidate was obviously Rostovtzeff, described here as "a very brilliant and able man who could possibly be had for $5,000 and expenses hither." Westermann's second choice was A. E. R. Boak at Michigan, then in his thirties and judged by Westermann, quite rightly, to be a "good, solid man with a future." Westermann went on to observe that he found Boak "much more solid than Tenney Frank."

This last name calls to mind one of the leading scholars of the economic history of the ancient world, a person whose name is associated with a multi-volume economic history of the Roman Empire and a role as an important teacher at the Johns Hopkins University. Along with Lily Ross Taylor and T. R. S. Broughton, Tenney Frank has been generally numbered among the best of American historians of Rome who reached maturity in the first half of the present century. Westermann, however, had a quite different opinion. In the *American Historical Review* of October 1914, he had done a review of Tenney Frank's *Roman Imperialism* in which he eloquently raised questions about the nature of Roman expansion that have recently become live issues again in the wake of an important book

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on Roman imperialism by William Harris. Despite the courtly phrasing, Westermann's review of Tenney Frank leaves the reader in no doubt of his opinion: "The author's judgment must certainly be called into question when the divergence of policy and result is so great." In his memorandum on the succession at Madison, Westermann described Tenney Frank in the following terms: "Age, 42. Now professor of Latin at Johns Hopkins. Probable present salary, $4,000. Ability. Has done good work at research of historical character. Will produce much. Has entree to journals. Work will always be formally attractive. Actually is plated ware."

Among the other candidates on Westermann's list was the noted Orientalist, A. T. Olmstead, who is described as "distinctly an Orientalist with a salary of $3,500." Westermann notes, "Personality not good." The epigraphist A. B. West is described as an "able research man but a deadly teacher." Westermann's third choice after Rostovtzeff and Boak was C. H. Oldfather, who seems, with benefit of hindsight, a curious choice for a post in ancient history. Westermann's recommendation of him goes as follows: "Control of Latin and Greek. Well along toward doctor's degree. Very attractive personality. Good voice." Anyone who has had experience of university searches and committees will recognize ultimately in Westermann's document a deliberately tendentious presentation designed to ensure the appointment of Rostovtzeff. Westermann's methods and opinions may be called into question, but certainly his determination to bring Rostovtzeff to America is something for which it would be hard to fault him.

After Rostovtzeff's acceptance of the one-year post, Westermann remained in contact and devoted himself unselfishly to preparing for Rostovtzeff's arrival, even as he was also preparing for his own departure to Cornell. Westermann secured an apartment for the Rostovtzeff couple at a building called, in the fashion of that period, The Irving.

Soon, however, Westermann was diverted from his academic preoccupations by an assignment to the State Department for a limited term in connection with the peace arrangements at the conclusion of World War I. It was from his post in the State Department that Westermann tried his best to untangle an extraordinary confusion over the matter of Rostovtzeff's entry into the United States. Rostovtzeff had applied for a visa at the American embassy in London but without much success. The problem, apart from usual bureaucratic incompetence, seems to have been a question as to whether or not Rostovtzeff was a Bolshevik. This was a point on which President Birge had already reassured himself according to documents in the President's papers at Madison. A member of the English Department, who had met Rostovtzeff in England, had, in fact, explicitly guaranteed to the President at the time of his appointment that Rostovtzeff was neither Jewish nor Bolshevik. It is a bleak and sad comment on American academic life in 1919 and 1920 that both religion and politics should have loomed so large in the assessment of a major scholar. But the evidence is unambiguous.

Rostovtzeff's visa was still being held up for some reason in early August of 1920, just as he was planning to board the steamship *Olympic* to sail from England on August 18th. The President of the University of Wisconsin wrote to the Secretary of State to intervene. In his letter President Birge tried to offer assurances on the political side. "To the best of our knowledge," he said, "Professor Rostovtzeff is a loyal gentleman and scholar whose entry into the United States ought not to be interfered with." Meanwhile Paxson, the chairman of the History Department, tried to engage the good offices of Westermann in Washington, and Westermann in turn discovered, after a few probes, that the State Department seemed to know nothing whatever about Rostovtzeff's application for a visa. The trouble seemed to be in London. In a rather desperate letter, Paxson wrote to Westermann that he had received a postcard from Rostovtzeff confirming his intention to sail as planned and complaining that it took so long to convince the authorities that he actually was not a Bolshevik. Westermann meanwhile was obliged to tell Paxson that there was nothing he could do. The bureaucratic machinery had to grind in its own mysterious way. Rostovtzeff would have to be approved by the Department of Justice, by military intelligence, and by the American Navy.

All this confusion had a comic-opera finale

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that was entirely characteristic of Rostovtzeff's bravura style of life. Just as Westermann had despaired of getting anything done within the next few months, Rostovtzeff calmly stepped off the boat in New York. On September 1, Westermann wrote to Paxson: "Last night I heard from Colonel Nikolaiev of the Imperial Russian Embassy who is stationed here that Rostovtzeff had arrived in New York City several days ago on the Olympic. He was quite sure of this as he had seen a friend in New York, the old consul there, who had gone down to meet him. The State Department is grinding away on Rostovtzeff's passport, so I will call them off this morning." In short, Rostovtzeff simply got on the boat, crossed the Atlantic, and got off in New York City. No one had any idea of how he managed to enter the United States without a passport or a visa. But over the years pertinacity had been not the least of Rostovtzeff's great talents. Within a few weeks Rostovtzeff had made his way to Madison in order to deliver his first lecture to the freshmen of the University on Thursday, September 23, 1920. So began the Americanization of Michael Rostovtzeff.

He had to confront a large class of students in elementary ancient history together with a band of quizmasters, described by Paxson as "fairly competent assistants," who took the members of the lecture course in small groups for questioning and discussion. In addition Rostovtzeff offered another general course on the development of Russia, with two lectures a week, as well as a seminar in the social and economic history of the ancient world, resuming the topics on which he had presumed to lecture at Oxford. Rostovtzeff cut a formidable figure at Madison. Short and stocky, he stood very straight. His hair was cropped in a brush style, his eyes were disconcertingly bright and piercing, and his manner always positive. He could appear frightening, and the Wisconsin students, confronted with this awesome personality, called him "Rough Stuff."

The History Department gave Rostovtzeff a very warm welcome. He formed a particularly close friendship with the mediaevalist E. H. Byrne. The students treated him with respect and seemed from the beginning to have recognized in him an extraordinary scholar. At Rostovtzeff's last lecture before Christmas in 1920, one of his classes presented him with a bouquet of roses, which brought immense joy to Rostovtzeff. But he was naturally uneasy in this first year, partly because he was still insecure in his spoken English and knew that he had a strong Russian accent, but also because his appointment was, after all, for only one year, and there was no assurance of renewal. The Rostovtzeffs had abandoned all their worldly goods and were understandably apprehensive about the future, but Sophie Rostovtzeff was a source of great strength to her husband at this time of uncertainty and transition.

In this early period of adjustment Rostovtzeff seems to have had little contact with the Classics Department, which had certainly not elected him a member. It may be argued that he was not missing too much by being deprived of association with George C. Fisk, Grant Showerman, and Moses Slaughter, all of whom were given to scholarship that is politely described in the standard history of the University of Wisconsin as "appreciative" rather than research-oriented. Rostovtzeff was never a scholar who could make a distinction between appreciative writing and scholarly writing. Nevertheless it was too bad for the Classics Department that they did not see more of him. In the course of time he used to meet Showerman in Rome, which was where Showerman preferred to be anyway, but the matter of membership in the Department continued to be an unresolved issue.

The University fortunately wasted little time in presenting Rostovtzeff with an offer of a permanent appointment at Madison, which he promptly accepted. By the beginning of 1921 he knew that he and his wife had come to America to stay. One of their unresolved problems in settling down into their new life was concern for the father of Sophie Rostovtzeff, who was still in Russia and needed to be looked after. With his indefatigable industry and resourcefulness, Rostovtzeff eventually discovered that there was a Russian Jew who had set up a tailor shop at Irving Court and University Avenue and had proven very successful in bringing some of his own relatives into the United States. Rostovtzeff apparently secured the Russian tailor to act as his agent during a trip back into Russia, and the tailor arrived one day in Madison with Mrs. Rostovtzeff's father in tow. This up-

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rooted soul was totally disoriented, but he must have been content to be near his daughter. He was often to be seen sitting in the tailor shop or out buying the ingredients with which he would make jams and jellies in the Rostovtzeff kitchen.

In his second year of teaching at Madison, Rostovtzeff continued to offer the courses for which he had been hired but added, with characteristic breadth of mind, a course on Russian architecture from the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries. There was still at this time no department of fine art at Madison, and such offerings as there were had to be pieced together by interested and competent colleagues in other departments. The announcement for his course in Russian architecture survives in Rostovtzeff's own handwriting, and it displays not only the astonishing range of knowledge we have come to associate with him but also that fierce pride in Russia which remained with him until he died. "Russian art," he wrote in this announcement, "is almost unknown in this country and in Europe. The common view about Russian art considers this as a kind of provincial Byzantine art. Recent investigations of Russian scholars showed this view to be entirely wrong. Russian art had its own quite independent development and brought about monuments as peculiar and as original as did the other branches of European art."

In the first two years, at the same time as he was developing his various courses, Rostovtzeff threw himself with titanic energy into his own scholarly research. Ever since Wilamowitz and Eduard Meyer had invited him in 1914 to write a social and economic history of the ancient world, he had been thinking about that vast subject, which was eventually to appear in his oeuvre as two separate investigations, first of the Roman Empire and subsequently of the Hellenistic world. The war, the revolution in Russia, the uprooting, the unhappiness in Oxford had all conspired so far to keep Rostovtzeff from that theme for which, in retrospect, he seemed predestined. At Madison he began work in earnest, although as late as 1922 he was still making reference to a projected single work entitled "Studies in the Economic Conditions of the Hellenistic and Roman World." But in the increasingly congenial environment of Wisconsin, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* took shape. A revealing preliminary study appeared in the *Musée Belge* of 1923. It was here that he first divulged to the scholarly world his view of the hatred of the peasants in the Roman Empire for the bourgeoisie and their malign role in the increasingly barbarized Roman army.

At the same time as the preparation of this preliminary study, Rostovtzeff wrote a monograph on the personal archive of a certain Zeno from the Egyptian Fayum. Westermann had been right in telling Rostovtzeff that he would be able to pursue his papyrological studies in the new environment. The correlation of the scattered documents of the Zeno archive, hundreds and hundreds of them, in a single treatment formed the basis for a historical account of what Rostovtzeff called, in the title of his work, "A Large Estate in Egypt in the Third Century B.C." The subtitle was "A Study in Economic History." This work is no less astonishing for its diligence in collecting together so large and dispersed a mass of documents as it is for its imaginative handling of that material. The volume ends with a notice of newly published documents from the same archive. Rostovtzeff took understandable pride in seeing several of his hypotheses further confirmed, and he appealed to the scholarly world for the prompt publication of any remaining Zeno material. The book was published by the University of Wisconsin in its series of studies in the social sciences and history. It was handsomely produced with excellent plates and the liberal use of Greek font and sold at the price of $2.00.

The success of Rostovtzeff's work on the Zeno archive was due, in large part, to the good relations he had cultivated with scholars throughout America and Europe who could provide him with necessary information and documents. As he worked on this project, Rostovtzeff became increasingly eager to return to Europe to examine the ancient monuments himself and to resume direct personal contact with scholars there. By late 1921 he had already learned the techniques of negotiating with an American university administration for time off. He had enlisted Paxson, as chairman of the History Department, to approach the Dean for a leave of absence, but unfortunately the Dean was unable to oblige

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because of a strict rule from the Board of Regents that leave of absence should not be granted before a professor had taught three years. But as Rostovtzeff quickly realized, every good academic administration knows that rules are there to be broken, and by July of 1922 we can see that the Board of Regents voted an exception to its rules for Professor Rostovtzeff and allowed him to take a leave of absence in the second semester of the academic year 1922–23.

Just as Rostovtzeff and his colleagues were turning the screws on the administration for extra leave time, Rostovtzeff was floating another proposal in another area. He approached the Dean of the Graduate School, Charles Slichter, with a plan to excavate in the Fayum. Already in the preface to his book on the Zeno archive, Rostovtzeff had noted the need for immediate exploration of Fayum sites before their precious treasures were destroyed through the encroachments of modern residents. He had secured the support of two noted papyrologists, Grenfell and Edgar, for a project to clear one site systematically. In the preface on Zeno, Rostovtzeff had asked, rather archly, "Is it utopian to think there are men and women in the United States who may grasp the importance of such excavation and may help one of the existing organizations to carry out such an excavation?" Just as he was learning about the mysteries of American leaves of absence, Rostovtzeff was also mastering the techniques of grant-getting.

Dean Slichter was somewhat bemused by Rostovtzeff's proposal, and that is perhaps understandable since Slichter was himself a mathematician. He wrote to Paxson in the following terms: "I received the enclosed memorandum from Professor Rostovtzeff concerning possible excavation in the Fayum district of Egypt. In this writing he does not furnish me all the information I would like. I understand this Fayum district was settled by the Greeks some three hundred years B.C. and was abandoned by them rather suddenly at some time, perhaps in the second or third century A.D. Will you kindly give me the facts concerning this settlement?" Paxson appears to have detected, and probably correctly, a certain impatience on Slichter's part with the imperious manner in which Rostovtzeff had made his request. Paxson provided complete support for Rostovtzeff's proposal, but he then proceeded to address what was probably Slichter's main point: "The paper seems to me to express very clearly his desires and intentions, and the slight foreign flavor in its composition does not interfere, I think, with its usefulness." The proposal foundered and was apparently dropped by Rostovtzeff in the press of other obligations and, as we shall see, negotiations. But Rostovtzeff's desire to launch an excavation in the eastern part of the Roman Empire from a base in an American university may be seen as a prefiguration of the major project that he later undertook at Dura Europus in eastern Syria after his removal to Yale. Rostovtzeff had been quick to perceive that American munificence held a great potential for enlarging our knowledge of the ancient world through excavation.

His leaves of absence and his excavation projects made him soon realize that such things would be valuable bargaining chips in negotiations either for an appointment elsewhere or for retention at Madison. In the spring of 1923 Rostovtzeff's sponsor and admirer, Westermann, had resigned from his post at Cornell in order to move on to a professorship at Columbia, where he stayed until the end of his career. Once again Westermann saw Rostovtzeff as the best successor, and he managed to persuade his colleagues at Cornell to repeat what his colleagues at Madison had done. They offered him Westermann's chair. In a letter to Paxson from Rome at the end of May 1923, Rostovtzeff explained with charming directness the negotiations that he had been having with Cornell University. He assured Paxson that he was perfectly happy at Wisconsin and that his discussions with Cornell were designed exclusively to improve the opportunities for leaves of absence. "You know, Fred," wrote Rostovtzeff, "how much I like our University and our Department. It would be a great calamity for me to part with the University and you all. But you know also how vital it is for me to have time to work for myself and to collect material for this work in Europe. After the events in Russia it is the very essence of my life. I accept the freshman course; I am now used to it. I accept the amount of my salary [which, it must be admitted, was rather large anyway]. But it is hard for me not to have my vacations for two years.

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Material collected in Europe must be worked out, and I have no time to do so. That is the reason why I engaged the *pourparlers* with Cornell, in the hope that you will do something for me and enable me to remain at Wisconsin." Many a native American professor in those days was less adept at manipulating the academic system than Rostovtzeff already was after only a few years in this country.

Paxson replied with a chairmanly letter assuring Rostovtzeff of the Department's great need of him but at the same time noting that as a firm offer from Cornell had not yet come in, nothing could be done at that stage. The classic game of Academe was pursued to its inevitable conclusion, and in December of 1923, when Cornell made the formal offer to Rostovtzeff, Paxson replied that the Regents of the University, in their desire to keep Rostovtzeff at Wisconsin, had agreed to fix his salary at $6,500 per annum with every sixth semester on leave at full pay, counting the present semester in 1923 as the first in the series. Rostovtzeff had played with skill, Wisconsin had what it wanted, and Cornell was left to look for another professor. Undoubtedly Rostovtzeff's expressed wish to stay at Wisconsin represented genuine and deep feelings, but he had now put the University on notice that he was willing to be tempted away if the terms were right.

It was late in 1923 that the Cornell affair was finally resolved. Less than a few months later, Yale University had made known the availability of a Sterling Professorship of ancient history, and it became obvious to Rostovtzeff's colleagues at Madison that he would be a prime candidate. Carl Russell Fish, a rather pretentious American historian who had taken over the chairmanship of the History Department, told Rostovtzeff that, as soon as he had seen the announcement of the Sterling Professorship in the *New York Times*, he considered Rostovtzeff's departure inevitable. It will appear that Carl Russell Fish probably had an ulterior motive for anticipating Rostovtzeff's resignation. In any event, by July of 1924, just six months after declining the Cornell offer, Rostovtzeff announced that he would resign from Wisconsin at the end of June in 1925 in order to take up the professorship at Yale. We may assume that Yale assured Rostovtzeff of an attractive leave pattern, salary, and opportunity to excavate.

On July 1, 1924, Chairman Fish sent a memorandum to Dean Sellery confirming the departure of Rostovtzeff in the following year and making various proposals on the matter of the teaching of ancient history at Madison after his departure. This letter is not an admirable document; it reflects Fish's desire to promote the modern field of European history and to leave the ancient field to the incompetent. "I am very anxious," he wrote, "to have here a man of strength and scholarly productivity in the modern field of European history. . . . Now with reference to the immediate situation, I see a number of courses open. One, which is strongly favored by Professor Byrne, would be to recall Westermann. For various reasons I do not regard this with enthusiasm." After this comment Fish goes on to suggest taking the most junior people available, young students either of ancient history or indeed of other fields, and preparing them to take over Rostovtzeff's courses. These suggestions were clearly designed to save money, which could then be diverted to the appointment in modern European history. In Fish's own words: "If we lose Rostovtzeff and make any one of these arrangements, except that with Westermann, there will be the budgetary opportunity of doing something more substantial for modern European history. I had in mind some such plan as calling Arnold Toynbee for a year on investigation." It looks in an odd way as if Fish had ambitions to do in the modern field exactly what Westermann had done in the ancient—to transplant a giant.

Rostovtzeff, who had learned much about university politics over the last four years and perhaps even knew the way in which Westermann had engineered his own appointment, now set about to persuade his colleagues to bring to Madison the Byzantine historian Alexander Vasiliev. Vasiliev, who was three years older than Rostovtzeff, was at that time a professor at what both scholars preferred to call the Imperial University of St. Petersburg, where an invitation arrived to teach at Madison for one year. Vasiliev quickly accepted and duly appeared on the scene in September of 1925, after Rostovtzeff's departure to Yale. He impressed his colleagues at the University of Wisconsin as a rather old and disorganized

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Russian gentleman with an inexplicable taste for going to the movies. Unlike Rostovtzeff, Vasiliev failed at first to command the respect of his classes, which acquired a considerable reputation for disorder. The personalities of "Ole Vassy" and "Rough Stuff" could scarcely have been more unlike.

It is from those first months of Vasiliev's time at Madison that we learn still more about the influence of the University of Wisconsin on Rostovtzeff himself. For it is clear that he was not happy in the move to Yale. Palpable traces of his dissatisfaction can be seen in the preface to his *History of the Ancient World*, in which the work was eloquently dedicated to the University of Wisconsin. The preface begins with a startling remark about the students at Yale. The book was planned and written, wrote Rostovtzeff, at Madison as a course of lectures on ancient history, which, he says, "I gave yearly for nearly five years to the freshmen of Wisconsin University and which I am now giving, in a slightly altered form, to the sophomores of Yale University." In December of 1925 Dean Sellery conducted negotiations with Rostovtzeff to reinstate him as the Professor of Ancient History at Madison.

When Vasiliev became aware of the possibility of Rostovtzeff's return, he was alarmed. He understood perfectly well that the Department would be unlikely to renew his one-year contract if this happened. At a Department meeting in late January of 1926, he undertook, rather pathetically, to outline his scholarly work in an attempt to persuade his colleagues of his merits. Only a week later he accepted an appointment at the University of Egypt in Cairo, presumably because he had become convinced that Rostovtzeff would indeed return to Madison. By the end of February, however, Rostovtzeff had made a final decision to remain at Yale. In view of his past behavior, Rostovtzeff may be assumed to have won further advantages and privileges from the administration at Yale as a result of the talks with Madison. But it must also be said that Rostovtzeff was undoubtedly a good friend of Vasiliev. Rostovtzeff clearly wished him well and recognized that there was no real possibility of Vasiliev's returning to Russia after his emigration in the previous year. It is very likely, therefore, that an important element in Rostovtzeff's decision to remain at Yale was regard for his compatriot. This decision was not an easy one, and four days after it was taken, a close friend reported that Rostovtzeff seemed to have fallen into a very deep depression. The immediate result of Rostovtzeff's decision was an offer of a permanent professorship to Vasiliev. This he accepted and filled with distinction for many years. The University of Egypt had to look elsewhere.

During his first troubled year at Yale, the Oxford University Press brought out Rostovtzeff's *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*. This masterpiece had come into being entirely at Madison in the congenial environment of its History Department and its students. Only the inevitable delays of publication caused the work to be associated with a professor at Yale. It was the culmination of research that Rostovtzeff had adumbrated a few years earlier in his notable article in the *Musée Belge*. And it provided the model for Rostovtzeff himself in preparing his massive *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, which he went on to write amid the incomparable resources of his new university.

Long afterwards, when Rostovtzeff was president of the American Historical Association, he told the historian Paul Knaplund that his years at Wisconsin were the happiest in his life. That was obviously no mere flattery. At Yale it was no secret that, as one colleague there put it, "his affection for Wisconsin was strong, deep, and lasting." In the course of five years in a welcoming and stimulating community, Rostovtzeff passed from the isolation and gloom of exile to the confident productivity that characterized his work in America. The intellectual achievement of the years from 1920 to 1925 was stupendous, with the papyrological researches on the Zeno archives and the composition of *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, to say nothing of the two-volume survey, *A History of the Ancient World*. Rostovtzeff came to understand the American system and to exploit it with skill for no merely personal and selfish reasons. The desire for leaves of absence, the pressure for grants to excavate were all in the interests of research of the most fundamental kind. Rostovtzeff had always emphasized the importance of monuments and artifacts, the indispensable help of archaeol-

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ogy in the field, and the primacy of geography in understanding the history of the ancient world. In the process of settling down in America, he realized that the universities of this country could provide the resources for developing exactly the kind of broadly based ancient history in which he had always believed. As Clark Hopkins observed in his fascinating book on the discovery of Dura Europus, Rostovtzeff was "eager to make a truly significant contribution to American universities as well as to classical learning."

It was in Madison that the scholar we recognize in Michael Rostovtzeff came into being—archaeologist and creative interpreter of the social and economic history of the ancient world. It was there that he passed not only the happiest years of his life but perhaps the most important ones. It was there that he made the transition from eminence to greatness.

The Fear

ROBERT WALLACE

Our old dog's frightened of the wind.
When a front moves through, she senses
the pressure before the sky darkens
or the air stirs. Firecrackers wake her.
She cowers on back porch or crawls
under kitchen table, inconsolable.
At night she sleeps more and more
under the bed—and that's not enough
when the curtains billow and streetlight
floods the sill. Nothing assures her.
No touch comforts the quaking in her soul
at far-off fireworks or rolls of thunder,
or the hush of dawn rain. I wake
to her watchful silhouette.
I leave my hand on her back, but she
listens, stiff, and shudders a little
from time to time. So we get up
at least, to wait for the morning paper
and for sunrise, or for whatever it is
in snow or rain she knows is there.

ROBERT WALLACE teaches English at Case Western Reserve University. His most recent books are *Girlfriends and Wives* and *Writing Poems*.

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Ode to the Lightning Bug

SUSAN PROSPERE

By dark, when everyone dreams
of losing his clothes,
when Amy drops her blouse
over the rosebushes,
the lightning bugs open their topcoats
to fly, and their hearts,
enamored with the night,
light small temptations
in the minds of children,

who, in turn, move erratically
over lawns,
clasping captured lightning bugs
in their cupped hands,
until the night is filled
with the lit cathedrals
of the children's hands.

And Amy, luminous
in her own light, remarks
on these luciferin lanterns,
wonders aloud
if all plans are haphazard . . .

because all of us
imagine connections in our heads,
joining together these pinpoints of light,
dot by dot,
as we name constellations,

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the dots of these bawdy figures
forming and re-forming into schooners,
a three-ringed circus, lighted cities.

True king of summer,
fraudulent in its power,
each flash of light,
a laugh up its sleeve,
called *firefly* in tales of elegance
where paths are lighted
by their phosphorescence,

we know them here
as *lightning bug*, mixing
with a company of stars
until they confuse our senses,
our minds tired with sorting out,
forming perceptions
that change with each shift
in distance,
each flash of light,

though for the lightning bug,
even death is glorious
and predetermined,
whether collected in jars
or smeared on sidewalks
by children into the names of children
where they flare up momentarily
in a final iridescence.

SUSAN PROSPERE's poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Poetry*, and *Antaeus*.

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A Little Night Teaching

J. MITCHELL MORSE

A high-school English teacher, dealing with adolescents all through the school day, doing the necessary paperwork and committee work after school, and working toward an M.A. in the evening, certainly deserves our encouragement and goodwill. That is what we naturally assume. But if his work toward the M.A. includes an advanced-level course in major European novels of the twentieth century in translation, and he writes a five-page term paper entitled "An in Depth Analyzation of the Magic Mountain," beginning, "Thomas Mann was a pre war (World II) writer," the teacher of the course really doesn't have to read any further to know that the paper just won't do, and that he, the teacher of the course, is in trouble. For the author of that paper is one of the more articulate of the twenty-some students in the class. He did passably well on the midterm, a take-home exam consisting of essay questions.

As a practical matter the teacher of the course must read the whole term paper, pointing out its many errors of fact, logic, grammar, spelling, and vocabulary, in order to make the failing grade he feels obliged to give it credible to the high-school teacher—who nevertheless finds it incredible: not only a horrendous example of "elitist nit-picking," but also something that is just not done. Mechanical. Unhumanistic. Unprofessional.

"All this trivia!" he says. "What's wrong with 'analyzation'? You know perfectly well what it means! You want me to regurgitate facts? You don't count anything but knowledges and spelling? What about understandings! What about values! What about appreciations! These things are not measurable!"

That is the warm-glow theory of education: the theory that "the affective domain" is all-important and "the cognitive domain" all-unimportant, so that any emphasis on "mere cognition" is undesirable. Within the limits of my acquaintance and observation, that seems to be the working credo of most of our public school teachers and administrators, and of most professors of education.

For such a man to be a high-school English teacher is not a crime against society, since it isn't illegal; nor is it consciously immoral, either on his part or on the parts of those who certified, licensed, and hired him. Nevertheless, every time he enters a classroom he injures his students and damages society, since he isn't aware of the discrepancy between his motives and his methods. Plato's Eleatic stranger called complacent ignorance the worst deformity of the soul, since it leads us to think we are saying something when we are saying nothing. It is also a contagious disease. Our public school teachers and administrators catch it from professors of education and pass it on to our children. My student of Thomas Mann, for example, wants to teach "the whole child," exclusive of that "elitist" element, the mind. That is the only thing wrong with him as a teacher of young minds. In the name of not injuring his students' self-esteem, he gives them full credit for good "values" and "understandings," even if they can't state them coherently, and grades them all either *A* or *B*. As a result, his classes are full of mental flab. He would do less damage to society if he were a burglar or a car thief or a swindler. His influence is almost as bad as that of a drug pusher: both are numbing the minds of the next generation.

Is he unique? Is he exceptional? He is not. And—given the social situation, the economic exigencies, the need to attract and hold stu-

J. MITCHELL MORSE is the author of *The Irrelevant English Teacher, Prejudice and Literature*, and other books.

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dents, and all the other considerations that administrators must consider very seriously indeed—what shall I do if the other term papers are no better? Flunk the whole class? All those fathers and mothers with children to support and school boards expecting them to pass? Do I, J. Prufrock Morse, dare institute a new policy single-handed? Would it stay instituted? I am certainly not going to ask the dean how I should grade my papers. The next one in the pile, two pages on the Homeric parallels in *Ulysses*, also by a high-school English teacher, begins:

> The "Odyssey," is a prototype of romantic literature in the Western world. The book is structured according to the episodes of Homer. Joyce only mastered the basis of structuralization of a book on another. He didn't find a new method of writing or an example but utilized a process.
>
> The story of Odysseus is more or less this. Odysseus was attempting to get back to Ithaca, his home. The purpose was to return Helen to her husband, Menelaus. The warrior has wandered for a decade. Characters signify characters in "Ulysses," so Helen of Troy represents Kitty O'Shea, mistress of Stephan Parnell, leader of the Irish Independence Movement. This is a real story, James Joyce experienced one day in his early life.

Other teachers in the class wrote sentences such as these:

> By making his stories involved with social protest as well as presenting good well written literature Proust's public loved him, as for example the Prix Gocoor (sp?).
>
> Joyce also drew from ancient and timeless stories of mythology. For example, Stephen derives many of the ideas of his esthetic philosophy from Aristotle.
>
> Bloom is naive yet congcience.
>
> He could not quelsh his thirsty for beauty.
>
> She carased him.
>
> He was not cableable of makeing love.

Such, in too many cases, are the minds to whom we entrust the education of our children. Some time ago Pythagoras advised us not to clean up a mess with a torch, and the advice is good as far as it goes, but it doesn't go very far. We are involved in many widespread, overlapping, and interlocking messes, of which education is only one and not the worst. There is no evidence that we can expect disinterested leadership at any level of any government, or from any political party or out-group, at any foreseeable time; and in our efforts to act disinterestedly within the range of our own influence we usually face dilemmas or trilemmas of the kind I have just described.

I resolved this problem by giving all but two of the students deferred grades and by insisting that they rewrite their term papers with all of the corrections and changes I had indicated. That resolution was not at all satisfactory; it saved the appearance of academic decency, to some extent; but I knew the appearance was false, and most of the students were appalled and outraged by my unaccountable snobbish concern with little things that don't matter. The incident did not teach them to write better or think better; it did not improve the quality of other teachers taking evening courses. How could it? The purpose of pretty much any state-supported university, in its evening courses, is to serve the teachers who are actually on the job, not some putative better teachers. That is the difficulty.

As a believer in adult ed. and in educating our teachers in the subjects they teach, I had volunteered for evening classes off campus. In another course I taught, a full-fledged graduate course, there was only one high-school teacher. The other participants were a lawyer, a retired civil engineer, a young businesswoman, two retail merchants, a dentist, a real-estate agent, a bank teller, a bright-eyed, enthusiastic old grandmother, and some half-dozen hospital nurses, whose enlightened administrators encouraged them to study the humanities. Altogether a promising group.

In the first discussion of the first novel we took up, Kafka's *The Trial*, I suggested some similarity between the priest in the cathedral and Dostoyevski's Grand Inquisitor. On many faces in the class I saw the familiar noncommittal look of a person who doesn't want you to know that he doesn't know what you're talking about. It turned out that only the lawyer and one of the merchants had heard of Dostoyevski, and only the lawyer knew who the Grand Inquisitor was. Subsequent, indirect, and more tactful probings soon convinced me beyond any doubt that I was trying to teach a graduate course in literature to

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people who hadn't done much undergraduate reading. But—since with one exception they would not stunt or retard the intellectual growth of high-school students—I simply adjusted my sights downward, and the course went rather well all around. It was high-grade recreation for intelligent adults. They could have spent their Wednesday evenings in much worse ways. So could I mine.

That was not, however, serious graduate work. This fact was driven like a railroad spike into my skull when the bright-eyed, enthusiastic old grandmother asked me to recommend her for matriculation in the Ph.D. program. She had already taken and passed another graduate course in the evening; she confidently and rightly expected to pass this one; she thought, not without reason, that she was demonstrating a capacity to do graduate work; she had no inkling that serious professional education, involving a great deal of detailed knowledge, was not quite the same thing as high-grade recreation.

Unable to tell her that the course she was taking, officially listed in the graduate catalogue, was not a *real* graduate course, or that she could not realistically hope to meet the rigorous requirements for the Ph.D., I cravenly promised to recommend her. Next day I put the problem to the chairman of the English graduate program committee. He said, "Write a letter of recommendation that will indicate to me but not to her that she is not prepared, and I will do the rest." He smiled. "I can do it, because I don't have to face her." He handled it very well. His letter of rejection occasioned no offense but only a little disappointment.

At the next meeting of the faculty I brought up the whole subject of giving graduate credit for courses taught in circumstances that made it necessary to water them down. A number of other teachers reported similar experiences, and thenceforth, at least at that university, Chautauqua-style courses have no longer counted toward the Ph.D.

They must, however, as at most universities, count toward the M.A. Otherwise we would lose all those teachers and their tuition fees, and antagonize all the nearby school boards and perhaps our state legislators as well. But we don't put it in such blatant financial and political terms. We say we must meet our responsibility to the community. And what is our responsibility? We say we must articulate with the public schools. And must we not? Must we? What if we didn't? Would that help? When?

We do what we can, with such resources as we have, in each concrete situation as it comes up. Policy? Principles? Until quite recently I was always ready with ideas for large-scale reform. I agreed with "the many intelegent sciencetist who are straining their voco chords to encrease our knolege" (*sic*, *sic*, *sic*); but now I am beginning to sympathize with a minor character of Maupassant's, who started to write an essay on education but gave it up because he couldn't think of anything to say.

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"Chuck It to Me, Mr. Jensen, Baby"

EJNER JENSEN

Henry Reed said it best. In "Chard Whitlow," his sonorous parody of T. S. Eliot's "Burnt Norton," he wrote: "As we get older, we do not get any younger." In its grandiloquence, the line captures just that blend of pomposity and vague embarrassment we feel as we are caught uttering a shameless cliché. For millions of American males, this truth has both a painful validity and an inescapable focus. For them, not getting younger is a process thoroughly linked to sports.

In my case, the process began early. It came during a beer-ball game at the end of my senior year in college. Everyone knows this sort of game: a keg behind the backstop, obligatory cups before each turn at bat, celebratory cups for a run scored or a notable defensive play. After the long Minnesota winter, this hot Saturday in May seemed especially thirst inspiring, and Michelob Light was not even a filament (let alone a light bulb) in an adman's fecund imagining. Our keg more likely flowed with Hamm's heavy or its late-fifties equivalent. Toward the end of the game, flushed with heat and success, rewarded and enlarged for my afternoon's achievements (a triple and three runs scored, some good fielding plays from my pitcher's position), I stood on the mound in what I supposed was a posture of pleasurable relaxation. But the beer and the heat and the too-tight jersey from a previous season conspired malignly to create for the few spectators a different impression. As I heard it, it came from a female voice in a tone that conveyed not pity but the wilting objectivity of an honest appraisal: "What will he look like at thirty-five?"

The next two years provided me with few athletic benchmarks. Graduate studies filled both days and nights for the first year and only a desultory effort at pickup basketball and the purchase of a tennis racket (my first) marked me as even a fringe member of the jock community. I remember being appalled on my first visit to the university's gym, which featured a weight room with full-length mirrors. No such goads to self-admiration were available at my small Minnesota college, and I've always held the appropriately modest view that the practice of narcissism ought to be restricted to people like Narcissus. The second year, spent in London, involved even less athletic activity and few opportunities for a serious fan of American sports. I spent a pound or two on a membership in the university's athletic facility but chiefly to gain access to an occasional hot shower, an amenity not available in my cold-water flat. Cricket remained a puzzle to me, while football (soccer) seemed attractive but ultimately foreign. Dexterity I understood, and even verbal dexterity, as a sort of metaphor; but pedal dexterity seemed remote and unthinkable, and the true sports fan has at least to imagine that he can emulate the skills of his heroes. The Paris *Herald-Tribune* brought news of Bill Mazeroski's World Series heroics, but little else that caught my eye.

In any event, my days as a knowledgeable fan were numbered anyway, though I couldn't have known that in 1960. I don't mean that today I can't tell Maurice Cheeks from Maurice Lucas, or that I don't turn first to the sports page in my local paper (and to the box scores before the lead stories). I mean that the identification isn't there—the sense that I

✪ EJNER JENSEN, professor of English at the University of Michigan, is Distinguished Visiting Professor at the U.S. Air Force Academy. He is the author of *Ben Jonson's Comedies on the Modern Stage* and the editor of *The Future of "Nineteen Eighty-Four."*

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know all the figures and their peculiar strengths, the assurance that comes from those stored mental images of the gestures and habits of special favorites in sport. Mark Gastineau can turn to break dancing for all I care; he'll never be as memorable to me as that vision of Don Newcombe, motionless and terrifying as he stares down from the mound toward the plate.

One event defined this stage in my progress with a sort of comic clarity. It was 1962, and I was back in graduate school. One afternoon I was playing in a pickup softball game with fellow teaching assistants and the members of a fraternity, some of whom were my students. We had been swapping equipment throughout the game, and on one trip to the outfield I snatched up a signature glove. It was worn and even a bit shabby, but the initials were clear: M—— M——. The first name that occurred to me, embarrassing in retrospect but appropriate for one who aspired to be a professor (if one can aspire to muddleheadedness as well as scholarly achievement) was Marty Marion, the great shortstop of the St. Louis Cardinals during the 1940s and early 1950s. Since no one had heard my thought, I revised it quickly to Mickey Mantle. But a closer scrutiny of the fading letters told me that M—— M—— was someone wholly unknown to me, a figure with no history, no statistics, no defining skills or tics, a player whose existence had made my aging somehow palpable. I immediately forgot his name.

Not long after this episode, in another game with the same players, something happened that confirmed that I was not getting younger. If the existence of M—— M—— redefined my role as a fan, this event drove its meaning straight to the core of my identity. Again, I was on the mound. But this was no beer-ball game, and the mood was early-season serious. Even though the players from both sides—teaching assistants and fraternity boys—were scattered randomly on the opposing teams, each player wanted his team to win. In the last inning, our catcher was injured and returned to the safety of the outfield. His replacement was an engaging, lively, C-ish student who had worked to the full stretch of his ability in my class. As the first batter of the inning approached the plate, I set myself on the mound. My catcher, however, seemed unready; through the openings in his mask I could just discern a look that mingled confusion and distress. Finally, in a quick motion he re-established himself in a crouch, offered his mitt as a target, and shouted his heartfelt and innocent encouragement: "Chuck it to me, Mr. Jensen, baby!"

It was a wounding moment. All this took place in the old days, when anyone who mentioned revolution in America meant George Washington and Tom Paine and folks of that bewigged sort. It was before the walls that separated students and those who instructed them were breached. Students asked for conferences ("Professor, may I speak with you?") rather than claimed the status of equals ("Could you and me rap about this?"). So I knew my student's problem. The need for chatter, the demands of his position as catcher, conflicted with his role as a student and the custom of deference that he wanted to maintain. But his solution—"Mr. Jensen, baby"—placed me all too clearly on the diminished side of a great chronological division. My salad days were over. In life's banquet I was well into the main course, and I felt, with a surprising poignancy, that I hadn't relished it enough and that I had to find some means of making it last.

Shakespeare had something to say about that, of course. He knew, along with most of his contemporaries, that life provided two chief means of making it last, of perpetuating one's self. One was poetry; the other, children. Poetry was out for me. My undergraduate efforts at verse ranged from moony love lyrics, to dense philosophical paeans to Schopenhauer, to misguided Yeatsian imitations that tried to combine the two. Besides, the fit between poetry and sports seemed unmanageable. But children, offspring, that was another matter. They might give me a new start in that world of sports that had begun to slip away or—more accurately—to shoulder me aside.

I don't believe that my analysis of the situation was so self-aware, nor do I believe that I contrived to do my part in producing a son merely to shore up a crumbling athletic identity. Nevertheless, a child did appear, and it was a male, good-sized, with a great eye and (from the beginning) terrific hands. Over the next few years I continued to pursue my own interests in familiar sports—softball, a weekly student-faculty basketball game—and devel-

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oped some new challenges—tennis (with my now ten-year-old Wilson racket), squash, and even the formerly despised and hopelessly middle-class game of golf. But more absorbing by far, and more important, was the business of attending to my son's development. We rolled balls back and forth, bounced them, threw them, and caught them. I threw them and he hit them. I hit them and he fielded them. He shot them and I retrieved the rebounds. I loved it. There were moments when even the simplest of these games caught me up in a way that only games can, and I felt free from time and its changes. This was not a matter of living vicariously through my son's achievements, not the familiar case of Little League father. My son was, anyway, too young for organized sports, and my enjoyment was, I think, wholly disinterested, a simple delight in the play itself.

But organized sports came soon enough, preceded and accompanied by my son's inevitable development as a fan. Again, I came face-to-face with the knowledge that I was not getting any younger. Every sports fan knows the experience of watching a great sports figure hold on in his declining years. Athletes, with notable exceptions, can't seem to make graceful exits. Muhammad Ali is only the most striking recent example of the star who, having lost his brilliance, persists, through self-delusion or sheer vanity, in the effort to shine gloriously one more time. The efforts of these men and women (Billie Jean King—are there others?) draw from their fans a special sadness: memories ought to be safe, protected from the insults of human folly. But the sadness takes on another dimension when the athlete exposes himself to the criticism of those who have no stake in his past. Thus it was in the fall of 1973 when my son and I were watching the hapless San Diego Chargers on television as they tried to energize an offense that, unlike a dying battery, could do nothing *but* turn over. My son's interest finally gave way to derision, most of it aimed at the Chargers' quarterback. "They should take number nineteen out of there," he said; "he can't throw at all." Would anything have been redeemed if I had explained to the boy who Johnny Unitas was? Probably not. All that was in the past, and the past was gone for Unitas and for me.

On the field, as well, I confronted evidence of time's passage. As in graduate school, it came in the form of a young player's remark. My role, though, was a bit changed. I was standing in as coach of my son's Little League team for a Saturday morning practice, trying to achieve some order and purpose in a session interrupted from time to time by the natural aggressiveness and limited attention spans of seventh graders and by the efforts of the team comic, who kept trying both to shock me and to break up his teammates. Finally I banished some of the louder and less-talented performers to the outfield and set them to shagging flies. With the others, I began infield practice, hitting sharp, difficult grounders and calling out "Get one!" or "Get two!" just before making contact.

The discipline of this drill, however, seemed beyond the reach of some of the fielders. When the ball eluded them, they would pursue it and then toss it lackadaisically to the nearest base. If they botched the double play, someone would still loop the ball to first. There was none of that crispness that draws me to the stadium an hour before the game, none of that purposiveness that keeps the throws quick and hard and that turns one rapidly from a missed play to initiate the next one. Finally, controlling my impatience, I shouted to the player at second base, a wonderfully ebullient showman but one of the chief offenders in displaying this laid-back style: "When you make a blunder, just throw the ball in to the catcher!" His reply zipped back like a Bob Feller fastball: "They're called errors, Mr. Jensen."

"They're called errors." The tone was so dismissive, and it placed me so clearly in the ranks of those who teach because they can't do. I knew that I could still play, and I knew that I could in part make up for lost skills by the exercise of cunning. Besides, this was just one smart kid making a joke at my expense. Still, the message was clear, and it was one I had heard before: ". . . when he's thirty-five"; "Mr. Jensen, baby." The words and the feelings came back to me in the form of a disturbing rush.

The next years all seem to blend together. They provided no distinctive moments, none of those on-field epiphanies of the sort I've described. That isn't quite the case, but some memories beg to be repressed. After our basketball game at the university's intramural

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facility on a day when my shooting eye seemed infallible, a student congratulated me: "That's a great set shot," he said. It was, of course, my jump shot. It is certainly true, though, that these years brought me no revelations in my role as fan. I still read the sports pages, and I still enjoyed a mild buzz of excitement when one of my old favorite teams did well. But I added no new favorite players, and one by one the players whose great moments had a place in my memory disappeared. My son became a good athlete, as did my daughter (two years his junior), whose skills suffered no conspicuous impairment despite my relative inattention to their development. As I became more and more a passive observer of their lives in sports, I became more active in my own. The weekly basketball contest took on more prominence in my psychic calendar, and I worked seriously to improve my golf game and develop better strokes in tennis.

Still, nothing gave me such unmixed pleasure as going one-on-one with my son at our garage basket. But his skills developed quickly and to an extraordinary level. He could shoot from anywhere, drive around me with distressing ease, and—worst of all—outrebound me by a ratio of five to one. Before long, I was forced to draft my daughter. With her help, my defense improved enormously; and if we exercised patience and deft passing we could often get open shots. If anything, these games lifted my enjoyment to a new level. They offered real competition, heated up by my daughter's refusal to accept defeat without a struggle. More important still, they offered an escape from time that seems the very essence of sport's appeal.

But the game (to paraphrase Yogi Berra) is over when it's over, and like all games this one came to a close. My daughter's interest turned increasingly to music. The evenings of family hoops gave way, for her, to long, repetitious sessions with a budding rock group and experiments calculated to discover the best ingredients for a band called Package Deal. Late in the summer we played our final game before my son left for college, eight hundred miles away.

My wife and I returned from the trip in a car humidified at regular intervals by fresh outbreaks of her tears. She was losing her first child. Her boy was growing up. Things would not be the same around the house. I was stolid and impassive: who would believe a man who said he'd lost his youth a second time?

Back home, I determined to make the best of the short interval remaining before school took up again. I called a former student, a tennis enthusiast, to arrange a game. Once on the court, I surprised myself, moving with unaccustomed quickness and smacking returns with, for me, great force. In the second set, desperate to win a crucial point, I unleashed a vicious, twisting backhand. Turning too quickly to watch the flight of the ball, I missed the sight of the impact; but a sick, hurting sound, midway between a crunch and an anguished squeal, told me what had happened. There in my hand I held a terribly twisted, misshapen racket. The frame was snapped through in two places and the strings were stretched and grotesquely broken like the wires of a cyclone fence rammed by a runaway car. Somehow, all I could take in were the marks that located the racket in its time and place, the marks that defined its true relation to me. It was a Wilson Great Players signature model. On the handle, boyish in his Princeton cut, Tony Trabert smiled from a decal photograph. Even without graduate school I would have recognized it as a symbol.

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Books

Literary Companions

HAROLD FROMM

THE OXFORD COMPANION TO ENGLISH LITERATURE. *Edited by Margaret Drabble. Oxford University Press. $35.*

This volume will serve its purpose if it proves a useful companion to ordinary everyday readers of English literature. It is necessarily a work of compilation and selection, because the range of the possible subject-matter is so great. English literature has a continuous history of over a thousand years, it has been produced in many lands, and there is no subject on which it does not touch. Completeness in a moderate compass, and the equipment of a specialist at all points, are therefore impossible.

Thus begins Paul Harvey's introduction to the first edition of *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, published in 1932 and compiled and written, for all practical purposes, by Harvey himself, who depended on reference books, librarians, friends, and a marathon reading project. Although it set out to provide information about authors and the plots of their works, elucidation of myths and legends, a bit of classical background, and identifications of literary allusions, we learn from Margaret Drabble's new version of the *Companion* that "somewhat to Harvey's dismay," the project kept on growing until "the pressure of work obliged him to concede that he could not on the average deal with more than three five-act plays a day."

Since 1932, at which time some of the major reviewers received the book matter-of-factly, without extravagant displays of praise or blame, not only have a lot of answers to a lot of questions undergone a great change, but a lot of the questions themselves have changed as well. Harvey referred to "ordinary everyday readers of English literature" without any qualifying hems or haws. Though he may have had in mind some very particular clientele, today it would be hard to assess who those beings might be in the actual quotidian world. And today we would also probably want to ask not only "What *is* English literature?" but "What is *literature?*"—which is, in fact, a question frequently asked in certain circles, not all of them entirely arcane. Since Harvey refers to English literature being produced in America and elsewhere, he himself is aware of its wider scope. But the question of audience and the nature of literature he does not presume to tackle.

Neither does Margaret Drabble, even though her new edition of this book, published in 1985 with the aid of a list of acknowledged assistants, is an attempt at a complete overhaul in order to repair the damages of fifty passing years. Drabble does refer in her preface to Harvey's "ordinary everyday readers" but adds, "While the revision inevitably reflects the increasing specialization and professionalism of English studies, the chief virtue of a one-volume reference book of this nature must be that it can quickly, easily, and clearly satisfy the immediate curiosity of the common reader." If the common reader was not perfectly identifiable in Samuel Johnson's time and was a hazy figure in Virginia Woolf's and Harvey's, nowadays such a creature may be as chimerical or extinct as the fabulous dodo. Since the question of the common reader is a

HAROLD FROMM has written for the *Hudson Review*, the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, and the *Georgia Review*.

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veritable hornet's nest, I don't propose to put my foot into it, but the only indisputable clue I have obtained since beginning to think about this book appeared the other day in the *New York Review of Books*. Reporting on the results of their Christmas literary quiz, the editors write: "As for Puccini, if prizewinners (and others) look him up in their *Oxford Companion to English Literature* they will see that the libretti with which he tinkered at various times included . . . ." The *Companion* that they have in mind is clearly Drabble's, since Harvey has very little to say about *that* famous personage in English literature.

Drabble admits that a good deal has had to be cut out to retain the one-volume format (and her edition has about 225 more pages than Harvey's), most particularly allusions (such as the Doge of Venice), both general and classical. This means that Harvey's meaty entry for "Achilles" is gone, as well as prosodic terms from classical rhetoric, though classical authors and works are retained, even if it involves eliminating a separate reference to "Aeneid" by sending the reader to "Virgil." To remedy these limitations Drabble refers the reader to more specialized reference books, particularly Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*. Some marginal materials are also cut out, such as Harvey's generous entry on Einstein, while, curiously enough, Drabble adds an entry for Sibelius and apologizes for its tenuous connection with English literature. Matthew Arnold's famed "Wragge is in custody" has been omitted, but how many people will try to look it up? On the other hand, Drabble has kept the extensive entries on Sir Walter Scott, despite his present lack of popularity, because Harvey's work in that area "is so thorough, so scholarly, and so affectionate . . . it will never be done again so well." Authors born in or after 1939 are said to be excluded, a principle that inches out Drabble herself. Most strikingly, writers and works whose reputations have changed for the better or worse receive coverages that reflect the new estimations. And literary movements like structuralism, feminism, and Marxism have been added. But perhaps the greatest bulk of alterations consists not of additions or subtractions but of rewrites of Harvey's original entries, which have by no means been abandoned.

While the critical reception of this new edition has been rather extensive and more or less favorable and while most critics have praised the volume for its accuracy, there has been much complaint about the relative arbitrariness of what has been included and what has been excluded. Frank Kermode praises the book but then complains about the absence of biblical references; the limited treatment of American and Commonwealth literature; the omission of poets such as John Ashbery, born *before* 1939; and the inclusion of *Tannhäuser* but not *Parsifal*. Iain McGilchrist finds the book much more readable than Harvey's version, even for pure fun, but he also finds the literary judgments too vapid and conventional, particularly such honorifics as "distinguished philosopher and historian of ideas." But he too appreciates the volume's general accuracy. James Kincaid is somewhat harsher, even a bit caustic, when he remarks, "One might also wonder how many 'common readers' are curling up with 'Ralph Roister Doister.' " Kincaid then goes on to characterize the *Companion* as "neither a systematic nor, finally, a serious reference work." Like the others, he finds the principles of inclusion and exclusion somewhat "whimsical" and satirizes the references to F. R. Leavis as an arbiter of taste. And yet Kincaid agrees that it is "remarkably error-free" and concludes that, although it is "pigheaded and fussy," it is still an "admirable volume."

When all of these criticisms have finally been made, it is the enrichment through all sorts of additions that is the salient feature of this new *Companion*, an enrichment that improves the quality of almost everything that this book tries to do. Examine, for starters, the length of the entries. Generally speaking, if an entry was long in Harvey, it is at least as long—and usually longer—in Drabble. In both versions we have extended treatments of Blake, Wordsworth, Samuel Johnson, Francis Bacon, and Shakespeare, to name a few. The plot summaries also remain as extended as before. But there has been a considerable expansion and sophistication of the treatment of many figures to whom Harvey gave only dry and cursory attention. Although part of the explanation of this may be that a period of fifty years has caused a different weighting of almost everything, a more significant explanation is that the rise of biography as a literary form and the success of the Annales school of

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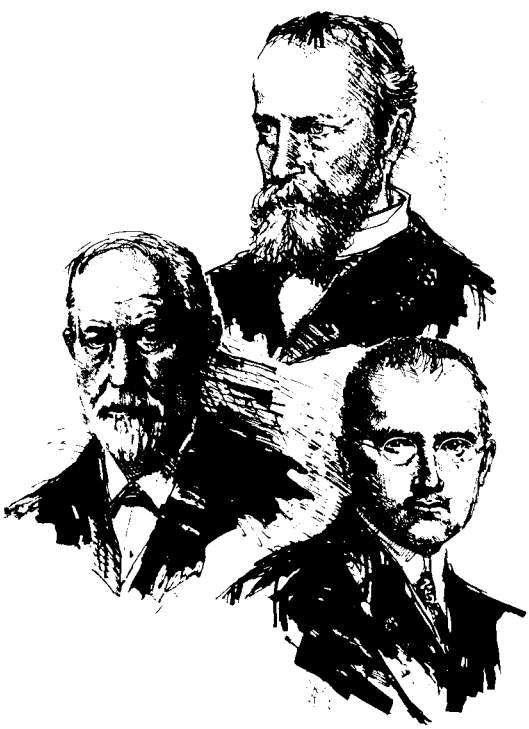

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history have caused a shift from titles-and-dates biographical techniques and from kings-and-queens political history to a more personal, psychological narrative that values everydayness and its quirks over formal records and legal proceedings. Although literary *theory* in the seventies may have subscribed to the then trendy structuralist belief in the Death of the Author, literary *practice* over the past two decades has behaved very differently. Far from seeing human beings in general and writers in particular as merely anonymous mouthpieces of the zeitgeist, literary culture has developed a greater and greater interest in the particularities of the individual; it rejoices in, rather than eschews, numbering the streaks on the tulip. "Reality" is grasped, according to this practice, not through nailing down the hidden and ghostly structures that underlie multiplicity but by making use of the most particularized quirks and quiddities as avenues to understanding.

The extraordinary growth and stature of biography, fertilized to an extent by the influence of psychoanalysis, can be witnessed in the transformation that the descriptions of authors and their works have undergone in the changing of the guard from Harvey to Drabble. Harvey's nine-line account of Frank Harris (I am using the third edition, 1960) does not afford a clue to Harris's wild personality and sexual braggadocio. Only his editorial positions and his books are given, along with their dates. Drabble's account is six times as long, gives us a few bits of biography, quotes Wells's characterization of Harris as "too loud and vain," alludes to his fight against Victorian prudery, his "sexually boastful, explicit (and unreliable) memoirs," and concludes with two bibliographical references.

Though Harvey's entry on Gerard Manley Hopkins may perhaps be excused for its brevity by the short time between Robert Bridges's major edition of the poems and the 1932 date of Harvey's own first edition of the *Companion,* such an excuse cannot really account for the full page devoted to him by Drabble, with its detailed narrative of Hopkins's life, works, poetic principles, religious turmoils, and the extensive bibliography that caps it all off.

In Harvey, *all* of the Brontës take up about one column of text, whose material consists mainly of dates and titles, except for Charlotte, for whom a few biographical details are given, including a reference to her schooling in Brussels. But no mention is to be found of M. Heger, the Belgian schoolmaster to whom she had an obsessive erotic attachment, one of the major forces in both her life and her art. Drabble devotes about two pages to the Brontës, providing a full-page account of Charlotte's life and works that is positively brilliant in its compressed inclusiveness. Her education, her literary sources, her falling "deeply in love with M. Heger" (not so happily put, unfortunately), her writings, her publishers, her critics, her father, her marriage, her death, plus a brief bibliography of works about her—it is hard to believe that it is all there.

Even for George Eliot—and nobody was more famous in nineteenth-century England (and America) than she was—Harvey provides less than a column, mostly of names and dates. Eliot's gradual defection from Christianity is put too genteelly—"From somewhat narrow religious views she was freed by the influence of Charles Bray"—and one gets no clue to her character. Drabble offers almost a page on Eliot. Although Drabble makes use of the passage from Harvey about Bray, she pointedly adds that he was "a freethinking Coventry manufacturer" and later remarks that Eliot endorsed Feuerbach's view "that religious belief is an imaginative necessity for man and a projection of his interest in his own species, a heterodoxy of which the readers of her novels only gradually became aware." But Drabble, who admittedly had the advantage of Gordon Haight's (and many other people's) biography, also informs us that Eliot's "emotional attachment" to John Chapman "proved an embarrassment" and that she met Herbert Spencer "for whom she also developed strong feelings which were not reciprocated." Her relationship with G. H. Lewes, her marriage to John Walter Cross, her audience, her publishers, her reputation's ups and downs—we learn at least something about each of these. Although one could wish that the account of her reputation did not conclude with a somewhat windy paean from Leavis, the final result is a well-rounded impression of George Eliot that can be filled in further by a reader who follows up the clues that are provided for additional information.

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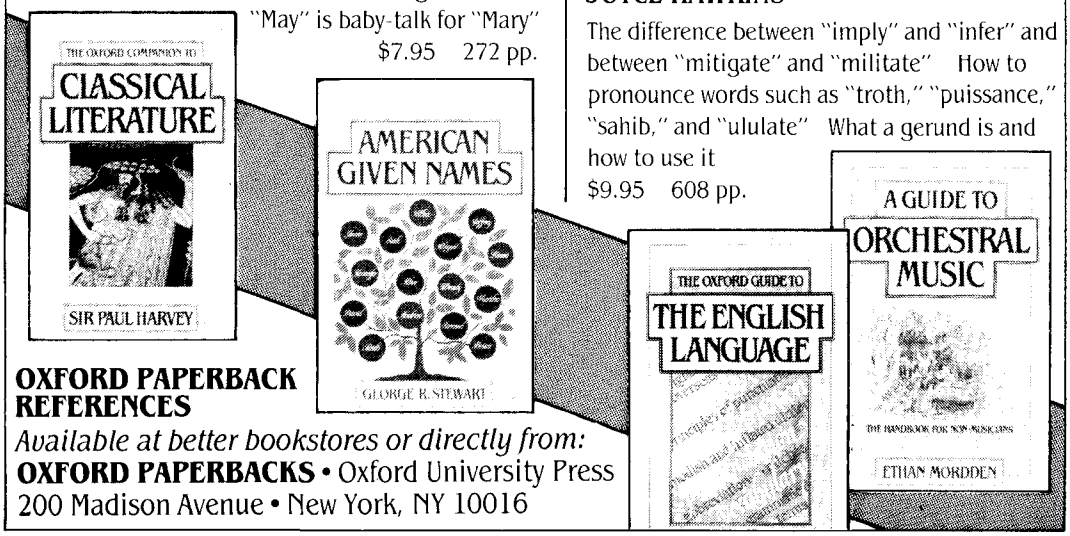

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A similarly comprehensive upgrading of D. H. Lawrence, from a paragraph of titles and dates in Harvey to more than a page in Drabble, produces notable results, except for the absence of any references whatever to books about Lawrence—not even Harry Moore's biographies. Since even Drabble's account of Virgil is much more substantial and detailed than Harvey's, what we see here is not just a partiality to Victorianism or modernism but a different (if sometimes obscure) conception of what it is that we need to know in the 1980s.

The plot summaries of literary works, which occupy a good deal of space in both editions, have also in many cases undergone notable alteration. While Harvey's summary of *The Ambassadors* is retained (though it would have benefited from revision), the entry for *Wuthering Heights* adds a preface about the method of narration and then goes on to refine Harvey's observations. Whereas the original version remarks that "Heathcliff's passionate and ferocious nature finds its complement in Earnshaw's daughter, Catherine, and he falls passionately in love with her," Drabble ends the sentence after "Catherine." Then Drabble adds, "Their childhood collusions develop into an increasingly intense though vexed attachment. . . ." Such a change amounts to more than a finicky quibble, for to describe Heathcliff as falling "passionately in love" with Catherine is to write another novel than *Wuthering Heights*, where the relationships in general—and this one in particular—do not fall into such convenient or conventional genres as "passionate love." Harvey continues, "Being possessed of money, he [Heathcliff'] is welcomed by Hindley, a coarse-natured gambler, who is now married." This is changed by Drabble to: "Heathcliff is welcomed by Hindley, by now widowed with a son, Hareton, and a hardened gambler." This surely does greater justice to the modulations of *Wuthering Heights*, whether literary works are supposed to have an existence independent of the reader or not.

As for *Clarissa*, Harvey's entry, which is quadrupled by Drabble, makes no reference to a rape, but with characteristic gentility merely remarks, "But she is secretly fascinated by him [Lovelace], and he succeeds in carrying her off." Drabble, writing in a blunter era, reports that Lovelace, "abetted by the women of the [bawdy] house, drugs and rapes her, an event he reports in one of the shortest letters of the work." Yet it could be said that this "blunter era" is in certain respects also a more refined one, since the ability—whether linguistically or socially sanctioned—to express more carefully differentiated thoughts is surely a kind of refinement.

Although I would not go so far as to quarrel with the praise that has been accorded this new *Companion* for its general "accuracy," shortcomings exist that could legitimately be characterized as forms of error. Though Drabble does an expansive overhaul of Harvey's entry for George Gissing, correcting its erroneous claims that Gissing left Manchester College because of "an unfortunate marriage" and that he spent a short period in Jena, she still gives *Workers in the Dawn* as his first novel rather than as his first *published* novel, and refers to John Halperin's biography while ignoring Gillian Tindall's study, whose feminist point of view would surely be of interest to current readers.

With regard to its entries for contemporary scholars and critics, the new *Companion* is inconsistent to the point of eccentricity. Why, one might ask, are there separate listings for Richard Ellmann, Samuel Schoenbaum, Robert Gittings, and Michael Holroyd (who just happens to be Drabble's husband), but not for Leon Edel, Northrop Frye, or Frank Kermode? Though Edel is indeed mentioned in the course of entries both for Henry James and for biography (where his first life of James is twice mistakenly described as in "four volumes" instead of five), he is not cross-referenced like George Painter, the biographer of Proust, for whom there is an entry that reads, "see BIOGRAPHY," or for Terry Eagleton, for whom there is an entry saying, "see MARXIST LITERARY CRITICISM." Why do some major entries have bibliographies (quite extensive, in fact, for Shelley) while others, like the one for Walt Whitman, have none? And why do some of these bibliographies refer to minor works while ignoring major ones? The only two books mentioned about Virginia Woolf are Quentin Bell's biography, quite major, and Angelica Bell's Bloomsbury memoir, *Deceived with Kindness*, decidedly minor in light of the vast amount of writing on the Woolfs. Decisions of this sort represent (at

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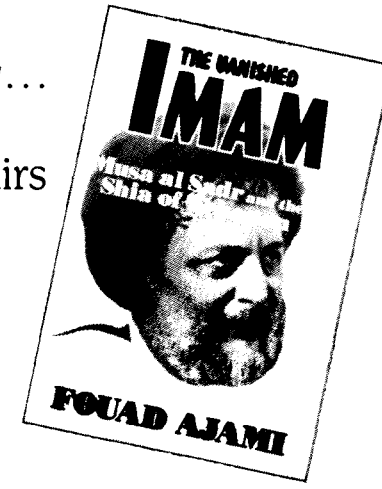

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best) poor judgments that convey misleading, if not erroneous, messages to non-specialist readers. And, inevitably, outright careless errors have not been entirely avoided: John Ruskin is said to have been cared for by his cousin John Severn, rather than Joan Severn; in the entry for W. H. Hudson, R. Garnett is said to have encouraged him, but in the entry for Edward Garnett, it is *he* (Richard's son) who is said to have encouraged Hudson.

According to Margaret Drabble, Harvey's *Oxford Companion to English Literature* of 1932 was the first of the familiar Oxford series. The idea for such a volume was originally suggested to him by the Press in 1927–28, and Harvey then went on to produce the first edition in less than five years, a herculean operation. It is hard to conceive of all the work that must have been involved in starting off from scratch, with no template or accumulated mass of materials. The book went through four editions before the latest one, with alterations made each time. After his first achievement, Harvey actually "went on to compile the *Oxford Companions* to *Classical Literature* (1937) and *French Literature*, completed by Janet E. Heseltine (1959)." These remarkable accomplishments have served the reading public very well, whoever they may be. But after fifty years, the time had indeed arrived for more than still another set of repairs. Not only were there large masses of new material that had to be incorporated, but, more important, standards of reading, scholarship, and taste had changed drastically.

Apart from Harvey's necessarily prim allusions to sex and his rationalistic conception of psychology, the professionalization of literary studies that Drabble alludes to in her preface can hardly be emphasized enough. This professionalization may in many respects be a disaster; today's scholarly life may be a far cry from that of the wandering scholars of medieval times; the academy may be just another corporate enterprise, vying with big business for revenues and grants; the experience of literature may well have been ripped from the phantom hands of the "common reader" and turned into a new scholasticism, promising more material forms of salvation for its practitioners—but it has to be conceded that higher standards of reading and of scholarship have evolved, and they are not entirely for the benefit of Hecuba. Texts are now read with a greater consciousness of the cultural, social, aesthetic, and personal forces that lie behind them. Literary texts are no longer read as if they were the voice of God, but given all the attention still paid to writers and their writing, one can hardly say they have lost their numinosity. As for Harvey's vague and abstract biographies, his gentlemanly aversion of the eyes from the gutters of life, his reductive summaries, his stinginess with bibliographical information that could lead the reader to other sources of information, these are characteristics of another era that can no longer be of satisfactory use to a modern reader looking for assistance. The losses of biblical and classical allusions are serious but not irremediable—and one remedy is to hang on to Harvey or buy a few other reference books. The conclusion seems inescapable: though it would not have existed without Harvey's monumental groundwork and though it has its own idiosyncratic limitations, for today's will-o'-the-wisp reader, Drabble and Co.'s *Companion* is the right book.

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CONFESSIONS OF A CONCIERGE: MADAME LUCIE'S HISTORY OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY FRANCE. *By Bonnie G. Smith. Yale University Press. $14.95.*

Reviewed by EUGEN WEBER

Bonnie Smith is a historian of France, of women, of French life. She lived for many years, whilst in that country, in an apartment house in the passage Basfroi, between the place de la Bastille and the boulevard Voltaire, a quarter of small shops, small-time artisans, and, increasingly nowadays, of poor immigrants. The XIth arrondissement of Paris is a *pink* arrondissement, witness the political coloration of its street names, republican but moderately so, like its inhabitants. It abuts on the much darker-hued XXth to the east, where the Commune of 1871 made its last stand; and on the Xth to the northwest, about which Richard Cobb has written movingly in his

EUGEN WEBER is the Joan Palevsky Professor of History at the University of California, Los Angeles.

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Promenades. Now Smith has come to join what Cobb has called the poets of habit and banality, those limners of the everydays of unremarkable people, who can like Baudelaire (though Baudelaire never savored mediocrity as they do) make us see how great and poetic we are even in curlers, slippers, and dressing gowns.

Cobb refers to the warren of streets that run east of the Bastille (*bastôche* for surviving natives) through the ill-famed rue de Lappe, just three blocks from Bonnie Smith's abode, as the traditional badlands of Paris, in the same class as Pigalle and Clichy. But to read Smith, who actually lived there, they are not very different from most of the other urban villages in which Paris abounds. It is there that her heroine, Mme Lucie, came to settle, by chance or by mischance, and where Smith became one of her charges and, eventually, her Boswell.

Whether Mme Lucie warrants so much attention readers will have to judge for themselves. Oral or semi-oral accounts of the lives of simple people have proliferated in France of late: maids, secretaries, telephone operators, peasants, and artisans have found their historians. Or historians have found them. Some readers like this, else the industry would not prosper; some find such works irrelevant; others have come to feel that one can have too much even of a good thing. I rather enjoyed this book because I like *romans vrais* and history from a worm's-eye view, especially when the worm is voluble and feisty. To misquote Baudelaire again, it is a good idea to sing the underdog, muddy, poor, homeless, wandering, whose instinct is marvelously stirred by necessity—the mother of intelligence and, even, of invention. Besides, France is full of garrulous old ladies, as it was until just the other day full of formidable concierges, and I have a weakness for both. Not least, Smith writes well and presents her heroine straightforwardly and convincingly. Others might feel that an existence which nowise affects history but only bears it cannot be worth one hundred and fifty pages of print. So, as the author says in another context, *caveat lector*.

On the other hand, the *lector* (*mon semblable, mon frère!*) out for a tour that tourists seldom get—or seek—of unspectacular France, of practice and prejudice the more popular for being commonplace, will be well served. Lucie's life begins in Caen, capital (there's an anachronism for you!) of William the Conqueror's Norman duchy, and treasure trove of medieval architecture until the British bombed it to smithereens in 1944—a deed Lucie never forgave. Normans, in any case, do not like the English: "no feelings, no sentiment, no sense of passion," as Lucie's mother said. The mother was a prosperous milliner, her husband, Lucie's father, an equally successful plumber, until his drinking brought bankruptcy, shame, and a move to nearby Lisieux, where Lucie grew up in the shadow of the cult of Thérèse Martin, the local Carmelite and miracle worker only recently dead, promoted to saintdom in 1925.

On July 14, 1914, then eighteen years old, Lucie became engaged to marry a soldier destined to die three months later, in one of the first battles of the war. "The moment—his death—lasted forever; and then nothing else about wartime touched me." Nevertheless, in 1917 she did marry, and happily marry, an older man, also a soldier, but one who survived the war to give her two sons (they only wanted one). Pierre and Lucie shared the trials and tribulations of sporadic post-war work, long spells of unemployment, at last a steady job in the Ford plant outside Paris, and a little house in Courbevoie that would burn down in 1943 after an Allied raid. Homeless, the family of four was relodged by the [German?] authorities. "Do you work for us?" they asked. Lucie answered yes. "Everyone worked for the Germans in those days, though no one will admit it now." Thus it was that they were sent to the rue Basfroi in the *Onzième*, into the apartment of deported Jews. Not a good prospect: "They would probably be back, I thought." We never learn if that unlikely event occurred, for, shortly, the indomitable woman found dark, cramped lodgings for her family and a job for herself, working as a concierge just round the corner.

The concierge (*anglice:* janitor, doorkeeper, porter) is a Paris institution, though not an honored one. Pierre Larousse devoted several close-printed columns of his great *Dictionary* to speaking ill of them. His contemporary, Eugène Sue, immortalized them in the characters of Monsieur and Madame Pipelet, whose name has stuck to the profession. Within a few years of the couple's first appear-

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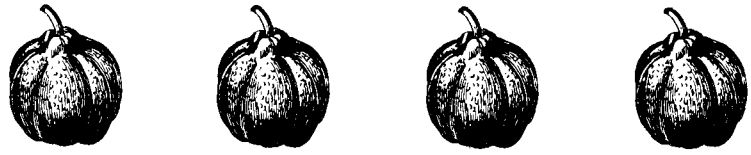

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ance in *Les Mystères de Paris* (1842), Mme Pipelet's first name, Anastasie, itself inspired by a character from vaudeville, would be applied to the censors and censorship of the Second Empire and succeeding regimes, busy like concierges in meddling with citizens' secrets, their mail, and private lives. "My heart sank at the humiliation of it all," remembers Mme Lucie. "Hauling garbage cans, cleaning the common toilets" that subsisted on every floor landing, until the other day Though "I was never raised to be a concierge," that is where the author found Lucie thirty years later, and where she would make her talk.

What did she talk about?

The history of twentieth-century France given us here is private, personal, seen through the smoked spectacles of old, old age. How good it was to be young in Normandy: the family outings on Sundays; fishing for eels in the Orne with a ball of worms and a big blue umbrella to catch the creatures by the score; country picnics; visits to Trouville on the coast nearby to watch the toffs stroll along the boardwalk; family feasts when men put down a hundred oysters each before the pot-au-feu, chicken, roast, rabbit, salad, cheese, cake, washed down with wine, then cider (for the cooked meats), then champagne. The little tragedies, as when the red hat her mother sewed for her and put on display in the shop window was sold to a grand lady for *her* daughter to wear. The greater tragedies: ubiquity of death—both her parents died in their forties, one of tuberculosis, the other of cancer of the throat, hence her hostility to smoking. And the profits death brought milliners, called on overnight to adjust old, or turn out new, hats, veils, and dresses for the mourning. The long hours of work taken for granted, to nine at night as a matter of course, well beyond when needed. The dubious cleanliness. At Caen, thanks to papa, they had running water and toilets "like the great," though most did not; and even they do not seem to have overdone washing, especially of the hair—Lucie's hair was first washed, it seems, by a hairdresser before her First Communion. No wonder that "more or less everyone had little bugs. . . . " At Lisieux, it would be far worse: the household waste put on the street to be carted away by fertilizer merchants, the laundry done in the river that also served as sewer. There was no tap or pump in house or yard. So, like most, they had to fetch water from a fountain down the street. It was while fetching water from the fountain that Lucie met her future fiancé.

Then there was war and, in 1917, marriage. (How did they find the food and drink for a three-day feast?) Then the horror and pain of childbirth, to be avoided, not always successfully, thereafter. A good husband is one who thinks of contraception; the legalization of abortion in 1974 was the greatest blessing to women Mme Lucie knows. A few days after giving birth, Lucie goes to be churched, in penitence "for having committed the sin of fleshly contact." The newly delivered baby is rubbed with rum to make it cry, and his milk is cut with a drop of Calvados to keep the worms away.

Everything changed in the 1920s: corsets went out, bras came in (a good thing to keep the breasts from sagging), bobbed haircuts elicited the grumbling indignation of the in-laws. This was the least serious problem encountered by a pious Catholic living with her husband's artisan family. Very nice they sound, but Communist and anti-clerical, hating the Church, suspicious of the worker-priests beginning to proselytize, though not yet wearing jeans. Lucie sneaks to Mass early on Sunday mornings, and the First Communions of her sons entail no great *guêleton.*

We do not hear much about politics: a serious thing, hence not for women or children. Lucie's father put on his best suit to go vote, but refused to take the child along; husband Pierre talked politics with his friends, not with his wife. War comes along again, and her two sons "had to go with the rest to do service for Germany." Everyone got by as best they could, thanks to the black market, barter, and *débrouillardise.* All that we hear has been weighed on the scales of family experience and personal interest. "Pétain saved my sons. . . . He came to an agreement with the Germans, and kept my sons from being killed. De Gaulle—he left us."

The chunk of life that Smith herself observed provides few more notations. Contrary to received wisdom, one marks the mobility, especially geographic, of ordinary people. Lucie's grandparents had moved to Caen from Grenoble; her parents moved from Caen to Lisieux; Pierre and Lucie moved first to Pro-

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vence, then Paris—all in search of work. Her eldest son moves too, the younger only half, buying a derelict country house he fixes up himself: "Why did Antoine buy a house in Picardy, where armies always invade?" In Lucie's old age the traditional exchange of goods and services continues between those who help the concierge and are rewarded by her with bottles of wine or other goodies. Coquetry lasts almost to the end. What lasts even longer are thrift and fear: the provisions hoarded for a rainy day. A long life lived on the brink of deprivation seeks compensation in otherwise inexplicably vast food stores.

We leave Mme Lucie in 1981, retired and decrepit, but valiantly keeping out of the hospital (If you go there, you die), thanks to her son's care and to M. Chirac's home-visitors for the aged ("At least he kept his promises to old people like us. Now this new man—Mitterrand—he's made too many promises to keep any of them"), a battered monument to fortitude and to the virtues of necessity. As the book ends, even her memory has failed her. But Smith has saved it for us and, with it, a witness to much that has been left unsung. "People sang all the time in those days," says Mme Lucie. Perhaps that is what we like to remember.

Down a Dark Road

RANDALL JARRELL'S LETTERS. *Edited by Mary Jarrell. Houghton Mifflin. $29.95.*

Reviewed by HEATHER ROSS MILLER

Sometime late on October 14, 1965, I was awakened by a phone call from a reporter from the *Raleigh News & Observer* who said, "Randall Jarrell killed himself tonight, and I'm wondering if you'd like to make a comment." The comment I gave then was ineffectual, coming out of grief, shock, and denial, a mumbled tribute, "I loved him very much. He was the best teacher I ever had. He was my friend." Twenty years later I can make a clearer, if not better, comment. The grief has

HEATHER ROSS MILLER, director of the Master of Fine Arts program in Creative Writing at the University of Arkansas, is the author of several novels, books of poems, and short stories.

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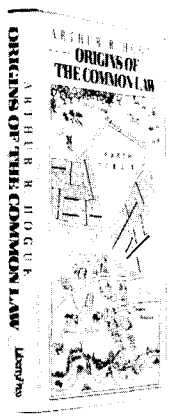

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been lived through, the shock tempered by reflection, and the denial has become anger at the ready announcement that "Randall Jarrell killed himself."

The world seemed ready enough in 1965 to accept Jarrell's suicide. I recall how the circuits lit up, the smooth words falling into obituaries. *Newsweek*, reporting in its October 25, 1965, issue, under its "Transition" column, announced this "highly hailed U.S. poet . . . pungent critic of contemporary taste . . . an apparent suicide . . . reportedly leaped into the path of an oncoming car. . . ." The passport-sized photo of a bearded and staring Randall Jarrell was captioned: "Jarrell: Pungent poetry."

Such facile reporting did not go unchallenged. In the November 22, 1965, issue, *Newsweek* printed a long letter from Mary Jarrell stating all the facts surrounding her husband's death and concluding: "When no written evidence exists that suicide was intended, a humane and safer course for future obituaries would be to assume death was accidental until proven otherwise." *Newsweek* replied with one sentence: "After a three-week investigation, the Orange County medical examiner's office ruled that Jarrell's death was accidental."

Now written evidence does exist to settle the question of Jarrell's death twenty years ago on a dark road in Chapel Hill, North Carolina: *Randall Jarrell's Letters*, edited by his widow Mary Jarrell. But it will take more than one sentence to correct those first facile announcements of suicide. People determined to prove Jarrell killed himself will search these letters for evidence of a disturbed personality and find, perhaps, in the later ones a classic manic depressive and an exhausted talent. They will probably also accuse Mary Jarrell of overstating her case, of placing herself on center stage with her abundant commentary, of orchestrating the letters. And she does have, they will be quick to point out, an ax to grind.

Others, admittedly Randall's friends and students, will also look at these letters sharply, and for good reasons. For one, the death itself, the wasting of his generous and creative spirit, is still a shock. For another, we are not willing to accept easy explanations. We make it hard on ourselves. It is hard to accept the pettiness and silliness of some of the letters, the contradictions that made up the man Randall Jarrell, with his obsessive search for perfect friendships, perfect editors, and his glorifying in chosen women as soulmates: "O star, sister, breathe on me!"

This is the gauntlet we run if we are to grasp in any ordered manner what was going on in the poet's mind as he observed, perceived, struggled with, and produced the poetry for which he was noted, the criticism for which he was valued or despised, the students for whom he existed as the strongest measure of poetic courage.

Boris Pasternak, in *Safe Conduct*, told us that biography belongs to heroes and that poets cannot be presented in such a way. The recorded life of a poet does not lie down in a straight line with easy, predictable facts. It has to be made up, Pasternak wrote, from seeming unessentials, from subconscious things that are hard to measure, and "composed of all that is happening to his readers and which he does not know."

These seeming unessentials and hard-to-measure subconscious things are admitted to in Mary Jarrell's introduction: " . . . they represent, I believe, those letters of general interest that are the most literary and autobiographical. . . . Finally, I saw his letters as an autobiographical source in which he tells us what it was like for him to read and teach and write for thirty years, allowing those acquainted with him only through his writing to know some of the thoughts behind it on his art, his cat, his intellectual hobbies, his closest friendships, and the women he loved and who loved him."

So the letters come to us with more reflections than in a prism, and Randall Jarrell's life is placed in context with all that was happening to his readers, students, friends, enemies, and also with all that he did not know.

> Shall I make sense or shall I tell the truth?
> Choose either—I cannot do both

So declares the woman in "Seele im Raum." In his letters, Jarrell, replying to Malcolm Cowley's objection to his sharp review of Conrad Aiken's *And in the Human Heart*, suggests that a good motto for critics might be "what the Persians taught their children: *to shoot the bow and speak the truth.*"

In "The Night Before the Night Before

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Christmas," a girl, puzzled over the conflicting sides of her personality, her many choices in life, declares:

> The long, mourning, hollow questions
> Of Martha Locomotive-Engineer . . .
>
> Vex Mary, in her bed-socks, listening guiltily
> To the hollow answers of her Lord.

In one letter, Jarrell writes to Elisabeth Eisler: "I lead an odd, independent unsocial life remarkably unlike most other people's lives, the life of someone whose principal work-and-amusement is writing, and reading and thinking about things. And this isn't nice for one's wife unless she has some great interest to take up most of her time." Two years earlier he had written to Margaret Marshall, on the occasion of his serving as guest editor of the *Nation* for a year: " . . . I have an even, cheerful, and optimistic disposition: what I write is therapeutically the opposite, I guess. I've always lived with 'ordinary people,' so I don't feel separated or essentially different from them, as so many writers seem to."

This is the man who, upon receiving the O. Max Gardner Award for excellence in teaching, could say, and mean it, "Teaching is something I would pay to do." He could remark to Robert Watson, a fellow faculty member at The Woman's College, "Gee, I'm glad to be back here. This college is like Sleeping Beauty." And this is the same Jarrell who could also write to Hannah Arendt: "The only thing to do with the freshmen here is to write a ballet with a Chorus of Peasant Girls for them"; and then to Margaret Marshall: "The average North Carolina girl talks as if she were an imbecile with an ambition to be an idiot."

Contradictions are apparent on all sides. The letters show Randall bound to enter into certain situations, such as the Army, a year in New York with the *Nation*, or marriage, and then, upon finding these situations falling short, just as bound to escape them. He did not, however, abandon them. He lived through the Army, and some of his most memorable poetry—what Robert Lowell called the most heartbreaking poems ever written about the Second World War—resulted from the tension.

In 1948 when he met Elisabeth Eisler at Salzburg, he did not compromise his marriage

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to Mackie Jarrell, his first wife, but he wrote to Elisabeth: "I can't be anyone's husband but yours."

Then, after meeting Mary von Schrader at a writer's conference in Boulder, Colorado, in 1951, he made up his mind to divorce Mackie. He wrote to Mary: "O joy to be the New Jarrell entirely surrounded by daughters and dachshunds, California and you."

This New Jarrell was a phenomenon he seemed constantly to seek, and the idea of change is central to his poetry. In letters to both old and new friends and to his family, Jarrell speaks often of changing, of taking up new interests, new places, new existences. It is hard to put a finger on the reality that the man was. Eileen Simpson, writing in *Poets in Their Youth*, states: "How little I understood Randall is shown by my having thought that he was not like the other poets I knew. What threw me off—aside from his not drinking, womanizing or tearing himself apart with excesses of writing—was that he was unlike any other human being I have ever met: Randall was uniquely Randall. Yet his illness, if not his death, as well as his late, openly autobiographical poems, suggest that in psychological makeup he was not so different from the others in the group." The group Simpson examines in her book includes John Berryman, R. P. Blackmur, Robert Lowell, and Delmore Schwartz.

I first heard the name Randall Jarrell through my family's conversations. It had a nice tone, the accents falling on the final sets of long wavering *l*'s. The name sounded like a rhyme, a couplet given to some character in *Mother Goose* or *Grimm's*. The double *l*'s resonated in my mind as the family talked, and I imagined what sort of phenomenon the man was. The family never described what Randall Jarrell looked like, never gave me a book of his to read. They exchanged lively stories with equal delight and horror about "wicked Randall" and "splendid Randall," and I let their stories decorate the phenomenon I imagined.

Years later, when I left the family and went to Woman's College in Greensboro, North Carolina, Jarrell looked as I thought he should: slender, heavily bearded, with quick dark eyes. His mannerisms jarred me: his squeaky, stuttering voice, the jerky gestures, the quick burst into laughter. And his habits and tastes surprised me. He drove sports cars. He played tennis and touch football. He lived in a cottage in the country. He lavished affection onto a cat as though it were a child.

Here was an athlete whose power and grace won him tennis championships. My aunt Eleanor Ross Taylor referred to him as a "poet in athlete's clothing." Jarrell was also an Army Air Corps volunteer who trained hundreds of pilots for World War II combat and who still got angry over such press comments as "Casualties were slight." "Imagine that!" he said to us in class, "The casualties don't think of it that way. They don't think they're *slight*!"

I marveled at the critic who as eagerly discussed the cleverness of the football quarterback Johnny Unitas as he did the cleverness of Mozart; the Phi Beta Kappa scholar who had translated Goethe and who, while in the Army (I learned from his letters), asked his wife to send him the daily comic strips of "Terry and the Pirates."

I became Jarrell's student in 1958. After Woman's College, I continued to study with him by letter and by visits. During that time I married, had a daughter and a son, and went to live with my forester-husband along the North Carolina bay lakes. I never stopped learning from Randall. He was first the friend of my family, particularly my aunt and uncle Peter and Eleanor Taylor, and then he was my friend. He gave me books, sent books to my children, and answered all the letters I wrote to him. One of the last letters I got from him, while he was in the Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, ended: "I've much enjoyed everything you've written and sent me. As Oliver Twist says, 'More, more!' " His last letters, as his last poems, make the same request on life, on friends, on himself, "More, more!"

A. Alvarez, in *The Savage God*, states bluntly that Randall Jarrell, like Sylvia Plath and others, killed himself. I won't agree to such guilt by association. Plath has become synonymous with suicide, and her work, unfortunately, is read with the drama of her death booming from every syllable. Whether or not she meant to kill herself, finally, in London, is debatable. She certainly practiced enough for death, and her poetry is the strongest flirtation with Thanatos one can find in contemporary poetry.

There is no such flirtation in Jarrell's po-

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etry. He deals practically with death: the soldiers die, the pilots crash and burn, people age and wither, we taste our own blood and learn from it. It is the change that fascinates Jarrell, not the ceasing to be. His last poems, in *The Lost World*, do not lament loss of childhood and vitality, but the loss of a time that was not fully appreciated. They celebrate a new recognition, one that is mellow and sad but also healthy and confident—a happiness that is not a reward, a comfort that is not a prize, but simply *is*.

The same sentiment is stated in his last letters. He admits his illness, his falling to pieces, but he accepts his changing, his aging. Letters to Adrienne Rich, to Maurice Sendak, and to Robert Penn Warren reveal such facing up to facts. This is the Randall Jarrell who wrote to Adrienne Rich:

I certainly do like the phrase "Difficult and ordinary happiness, / No one nowadays believes in you." If you believe in happiness and have ordinary good luck you really can be happy a lot of the time—but most people of our reading-and-writing sort have conscientious objections to any happiness, they'd far rather be right than happy. It *is* terrible in our time to have the death of the world hanging over you, but, personally, it's something you disregard just as you disregard the regular misery of so much of the world, or your own regular personal aging and death. I get a real consolation out of looking at astronomical pictures like the horsehead nebula in Orion; all the different suns the material galaxies will form out of, the little bright spots that are galaxies of hundreds or thousands or millions of suns—most of them with planets—all this in one little patch of space. If something ends, still, how infinitely much there is that isn't ending!

Jarrell could write to his new friend, Maurice Sendak, about their aging parents:

Our misery about such things is so hard to explain or bear—I guess all one can say is that we can't escape them, and that afterwards we know what matters most to us, what life really seems to us, and are better off in that way; we know that the surface that seemed to matter to us is just the surface, and that it doesn't matter compared to our real life and real self.

And, finally, Jarrell could admit to his old friend, Robert Penn Warren:

I've been home from the hospital almost two months, and am my usual self again and very glad to

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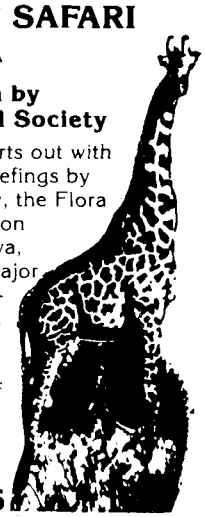

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be—I've always wanted to change, but not to change into what you become when you're mentally ill. . . . I haven't written any poems, but I've been thinking so much about the passage of time, and what it's like to live a certain number of years in the world, that I think it's sure to turn into some poems in the long run.

The long run. Our real life, real self. Difficult and ordinary happiness. If something ends, still how infinitely much there is that isn't ending. These are the seeming unessentials and subconscious things that bring us to the final contradiction, Randall Jarrell's death.

Jarrell, an athlete, would never have risked a disabling injury, the possibility of botching a suicide and spending the rest of his life in a wheelchair. If he had wished to kill himself, and to insure the job got done properly, he would have put himself in front of the car without hesitation. There would have been no casual walking along the roadside. The dynamics of the action in Chapel Hill are too clumsy for Jarrell's death to have been deliberate. He was "hit from the side," according to the coroner, "not the front, or the front wheels of the car." The Chapel Hill newspaper reported that "the impact spun Jarrell around and knocked him not more than three or four feet." Calling Jarrell's death a suicide is the same as calling the death of anyone who stumbles by the road and gets sideswiped suicide. It is too easy.

More important, Randall Jarrell's delight in people of all kinds, both literary and ordinary, his love for children and pets, would have kept him from involving innocent strangers in his death. No matter how disturbed or unreliable he might have become—and all the evidence we have, including the *Letters*, as well as the Orange County medical examiner's report, suggests that he was not behaving wildly on the evening of October 14, nor was he under the influence of any debilitating drug—no matter, the man I knew would never have taken other people with him, either as fellow victims or as causes.

There is the hard reality of his wrist-slashing to deal with, however. The *Letters* show no mention of this in Jarrell's own words. Only Mary Jarrell's commentary addresses the episode, and she puts it in perspective roughly as follows. He had been admitted to Memorial Hospital for severe depression. The drug Elavil, which he had been taking for some months, had been discontinued. Though his first reaction to this withdrawal was good, Jarrell quickly began to suffer melancholia of such depth that shock treatments were considered. Then he happened upon a *New York Times Book Review* that contained a piece by Joseph Bennett dismissing Jarrell's *The Lost World* as "clanging vulgarity, corny cliches, cutenesses, and . . . intolerable self-indulgences . . . a worn-out imagination . . . trashy . . . doddering infantilism."

While Jarrell had always been able to take the kind of acerbic criticism he so exuberantly dished out to others, this time it made a difference. Within days of reading the Bennett review, he cut his left wrist. But, according to Mary Jarrell's commentary, far from plunging him deeper into melancholia, this act brought Jarrell out of his depression, and he began the hard and determined climb toward recovery. From that point, things got better, and he was released from the hospital in July 1965.

The news of this suicide attempt came to me as abruptly, and in almost as bizarre a fashion, as did the news of Randall's death. I happened to be acquainted with someone whose husband was a patient on South Wing in Memorial Hospital at the same time as Jarrell. Gossip spreads in a university hospital as rapidly as in a small town, and the news of Jarrell's wrist-slashing eventually reached me with the appended detail: " . . . and now they keep somebody with him all the time, even while he is asleep."

My reaction then was, as it would be again, one of anger. I am still angry that "they" didn't keep better watch on Randall Jarrell before he hurt himself and that "they" failed to foresee the terrible effect Joseph Bennett's review would have on Jarrell, who was already despondent and vulnerable. But he recovered, was released, and went home to take up his life with his wife Mary in Greensboro, returning to the hospital in Chapel Hill for therapy on the left hand, which refused to heal properly. As an outpatient, he was free to walk the streets of Chapel Hill. Here, in the last balancing of contradictions, I cannot ignore the plain stupidity of Randall's last act: walking at dusk in dark clothing along a dark road with no white lines on either edge or down the middle. Jarrell survived many

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things. He did not survive his own carelessness, and for that we must hold him responsible.

For me, the letters do not reveal that Randall Jarrell killed himself. They do suggest to me that he was a disturbed personality near the end of his life, but that he also recognized his condition, as he had recognized his condition in the Army, during his two marriages, and in his long years of teaching. Mary Jarrell's commentary also reveals that he made frantic choices, struggling to live through a frightening time—such choices as his refusal to regulate Elavil and his withholding of information from his long-distance psychiatrist in Cincinnati—and that his choices got tragically out of hand.

But the letters themselves are reliable, even during the worst moments of his illness, as Jarrell wrote about his condition to people who would surely have been sensitive enough to grasp the slightest irregularity. He faced up to it all. He had lived through it and was making gallant efforts to continue. Randall Jarrell was, therefore, responsible for himself at the end. He was careless in one moment, at a time he wanted most to live. He forgot the danger and, choosing to walk at dusk in dark-colored clothing along a dark road, was struck by a car and died. For that I am disappointed in and sad for Randall Jarrell, my good, old friend, and I am still angry, and sad, at the waste.

Traveling Light

THE TOURIST: TRAVEL IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY NORTH AMERICA. *By John A. Jakle. University of Nebraska Press. $12.95.*

Reviewed by NEIL HARRIS

In ever larger numbers, historians, sociologists, geographers, and journalists are converging on the experience of mass travel. Long ignored by any but the most popular or technical commentaries, tourism has become a central modern symbol—both a cultural metaphor and an important instrument of so-

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cial integration. The tourist's sensibility, the tourist's expectations, the tourist's landscape, and the tourist's literature are leaving their mark on the world's industry and technology. Being a tourist, encountering a tourist, and thinking, seeing, learning, and eating for the sake of tourism are familiar enough to constitute a set of shared and easily accessible memories. Travel agents, auto camping trips, resort hotels, *son et lumière* shows, luggage allowances, motels, historic houses, souvenir stands, duty-free shops, marked route maps, currency exchanges, guidebooks, post-vacation slide shows, jet lag, charter flights, museum fatigue—all are easily recognized ingredients of a collective experience known by millions. Becoming a tourist, like becoming a parent, a student, or a patient, suggests a whole style of life, or rather a stage of life. Unlike age, however, tourism can be entered and reentered throughout a lifetime.

Drawing upon some newer analyses, as well as upon a host of travel books, autobiographies, diaries, and promotional pieces, John A. Jakle, a University of Illinois geographer, has bounded this immense subject but only slightly diminished its scale. His book confines itself to travel in North America (excluding Mexico) and concentrates on the period from 1900 to the present. It touches on all kinds of institutional, demographic, economic, geographic, and literary forms, ranging from the coming of national parks and historic site markers to the growth of the highway environment and the roadside strip. The book's passion for detail, immense coverage, rapid pace, and frequent redundancies serve, in fact, to evoke some of the packaged tourism that forms part of its subject. Informative and conscientious, studded with arresting details and interesting quotations, the book makes a pointed effort to legitimate tourism as a scholarly subject, yet it sometimes becomes as solemnly didactic as the voice of the tour guide. But the story it tells is important and worth describing.

Travel for pleasure has an ancient history and a long publishing tradition. While Jakle avoids any extensive commentary on the older literature and plunges in at the start of the twentieth century, he does summarize in his early pages the rationales offered by some pioneering students of the tourist adventure, like Dean MacCannell, Kenneth Craik, and Erik Cohen. Their schematizations are described, accepted, modified, and occasionally applied, but in no sense does a theoretical orientation dominate this book. It is rather the impressions of tourists themselves, the sights they encountered and observations they allowed, that shape the volume as a whole. As the chapters unroll, occasionally in a chronological fashion but often moving casually across sixty years of social contemplation, Jakle concentrates on four aspects of the tourist experience.

First, he notes the interest in and attraction to American nature, as evidenced by the rising popularity of national parks, camping and mountaineering, and the search for physical renovation. It is nature within limits, to be sure, tamed and ordered in many cases, an urbanite's view of the meaning of wildness, as Peter Schmitt pointed out some years ago, but nature just the same.

Second, Jakle sees a concern with region, the effort to discover just what makes one area of the country different from another: speech patterns, food, mores, landscape, architecture, dress. One of the paradoxical effects of the growth of tourism, Jakle observes, is its coexistence with appalling geographical ignorance. However arbitrary and overgeneralized, individual encounters with standardized diversity frequently are the basis for thinking of the country in geographical sections, particularly the West.

Third, and somewhat more briefly, Jakle surveys the lure of the metropolis and the search for icons to summarize and evoke the particularity of individual cities. Skylines, bird's-eye views, and local landmarks are all seen by tourists, although once again hurried schedules, massive hotels, and repetitive movements produce superficial readings. Jakle does quote a series of famous (and perceptive) visitors to the city, some of whom were better able to catch distinction and distinctiveness.

Finally, in a single chapter toward the end of his book, Jakle acknowledges the growing charms of history for tourists and the creation, in a relatively new country, of historic towns and villages, reconstructions like Williamsburg, and such vast collections and shrine sets as at Dearborn, Michigan. These sites cater to filiopietism as well as to curiosity, but their elaborate display methods are part of the

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industrialization of the larger tourist experience.

Running through all these subjects, indeed providing many of the book's most vivid pages, is the theme of automobile movement. The imperial highway succeeds boats and trains as the principal vehicle of mass travel. Jakle describes some aspects of the older transportation systems, and he talks about the development of airplanes; but it is the automobile, its effect on both individual and family, the coming of a total environment built around the car—restaurant chains, motel courts, cloverleafs and road dividers, turnpikes and distance competitions—that illustrate the paradoxes of modern tourism most poignantly. The search for the different and the distant is now conducted within an ever-more-insulated and easily replicated setting.

Once an active sport, demanding energy, ingenuity, and even considerable courage, the automobile trip has become, for many, a destinationless end in itself. "The landscapes through which drivers moved meant little. Places could be taken for granted. The only environment that counted was the highway and the automobile itself." Adopting some of Daniel Boorstin's insights, Jakle concludes that getting there has become the major challenge. As more Americans came to own automobiles, more were allowed to participate in tourist rituals. But the experience the rituals defined seemingly became less distinctive.

Jakle, however, does not overemphasize the paradoxes and frustrations that are so frequently a butt of contemporary critiques. He is at pains to argue that the much-derided tourist class deserves further study. He insists that more is happening than merely the fulfillment of formulized platitudes. He does this by distinguishing between good and bad travelers, the "irresponsible tourist" who "did not grow, but only pleasured, often learning little and keeping prejudices firmly intact," and the "responsible" or "diligent tourist" who "did not avoid the obvious world of tourism," but "assessed contrived attractions critically, viewing them as sights with social meaning."

The moralizing tone of these remarks exposes the author's response to the problem his book poses. On the one hand, traveling is a mass activity that has enchanted millions, reflecting a wider distribution of wealth and education, a higher level of aspiration, and an

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interest in the wide world. On the other hand, traveling is a collective mania that serves only to confirm prejudices, consume artifacts, and lap up useless data and endless banalities. Jakle can only divide the whole into good tourists and bad tourists—those who use their time to advantage and those who simply mark time. While Jakle insists that tourism can teach us a great deal and that it helps modern man adjust to reality, he also asks plaintively, "How can we rise above travel as the superficial validater of popular myths? How can we make tourism perform individually and collectively toward profound cultural ends?"

Such instrumental and manipulative questions hint at conceptual inadequacies. The profound cultural ends tourism serves must be followed by a different map. Because *The Tourist* tries to cover both changing travel patterns and the changing society in which they occur, it proves impossible to separate the actors from the set. Too much information is devoted to life in modern America, too little to the tourists themselves, the meaning of their experiences, and the functions of their rhetoric. It is fascinating to know that the first passenger airline was established in 1914 to serve Florida vacationers, to discover that the first drive-in restaurant with "curb" service was opened in 1924 by the Pig Stands Company of Dallas, or to reflect that Wilmington's Du Pont Highway was America's "first divided all-purpose road." But such details are so numerous as to cloud any definition of tourist literature as a genre. Long strings of quotations, some of them directly contradictory and representing an astonishing range of personal types, add color and warmth but not very much light. They are deployed to tell us more about changes in American life than about tourism as such. Trying to avoid being either censorious or blandly supporting, Jakle is driven to grade tourists according to their contributions to some unspecified cultural goals.

What is missing is an organization for Jakle's mass of data and a consistent method of defending it. This is no easy task but more could have been attempted. Jakle's sources are varied, but he does not draw on a number of important recent commentaries on performance codes and the rhetoric of description. The writings of Paul Fussell, Kevin Starr, Lewis Erenberg, John Kasson, John Stilgoe (who has written a jacket blurb), and Richard Sennett, on a variety of relevant subjects, are not cited. Nor does he summarize the older authorities on travel in America, those careful chroniclers of tourist generalization in the antebellum period or the Gilded Age (texts this book somewhat resembles). Just how different are modern travel responses? No baseline permits a precise assessment. The sense of how time has changed responses is addressed, but it is not sustained. The historical details overwhelm the book's historical framework.

One example is the photograph. There are many references linking contemporary tourism with picture taking. But, apart from some early allusions to Dean MacCannell's interesting observations, Jakle spends little time explaining how the photographic obsession reflects personal needs. He does not indicate whether the need for "markers" is an entirely modern phenomenon. It is, perhaps, difficult to appropriate personally a once-exotic world, one now so thoroughly familiar through motion pictures, newspapers, postcards, and television. Photography might be seen as both a ritual act of obeisance to the landscape or monument being viewed, one less taxing, embarrassing, or expensive than kissing the earth or taking up extended residence, and a demonstration of personal presence. Living up to the expectations and experiences of others is a heavy burden for some travelers to bear. The compilation of a record can be a substitute for the quest to learn more. The subject is broached, like a number of others, but then abandoned by Jakle in favor of data and quotation. Too bad. It is a rich vein.

It may be, among other things, precisely the didactic imperatives, the obligations placed on modern beneficiaries of leisure and miraculous travel technology, that have undermined or at least complicated the tourist experience for so many of us. If so, the problem will not really be eased by Jakle's book. Despite the breadth and diligent research, the book's conclusions only increase the sense of pressure on the ordinary traveler, who must try for respectability on the scale provided. The contemporary cultural meaning of tourism and its social and psychological history remain elusive.

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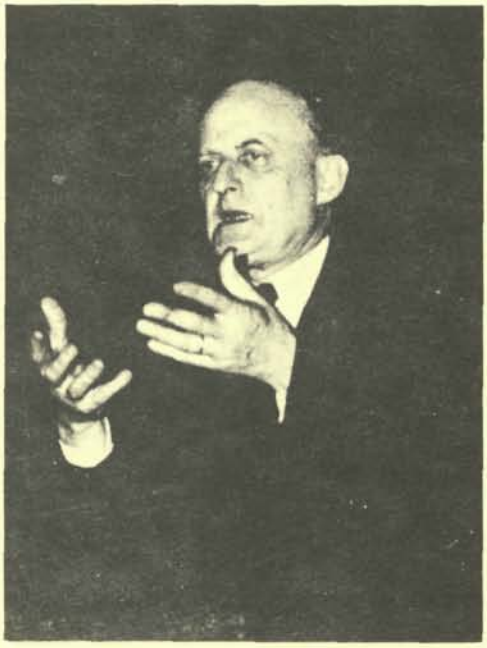

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